# Septuagint Varia

## Samestelling van ‘n klomp artikels oor die Septuaging en die waarde daarvan

**Dr AH Bogaards**

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## Inleiding: die 2020-vertaling se veelvuldige gebruik van die Septuagint

Wie die voetnote van die 2020-vertaling deurgaan, sal dadelik sien dat die Masoretiese teks dikwels vervang is met die lesing van die Septuagint.

'n Mens moet dadelik as kritiek daarteen sê:

- Die Septuagint is 'n vertaling
- Die Setuagint is nie kanoniek nie
- Die Septuagint is boonop 'n onbetroubare vertaling.

Uit die artikels wat ek hier saamgevat het, sal die lesers dadelik agterkom:

- Die Septuagint is onbetroubaar en die gebruik daarvan deur die 2020-vertaling moet baie ernstig bevraagteken word.

Daar word deur Ou Testamentici sommer maklik daarvan uitgegaan dat daar agter die Septuagint 'n ouer en beter grondteks sit. I. Tov het die Septuagint terugvertaal in Hebreeus. Hierdie standpunt is nie wettig nie, want:

- Die Septuagint is nie 'n eenheidsvertaling nie. Daar is slegter en beter vertalings, dws elke Bybelboek verskil.
- Boonop kan bewys word dat die Septuagint dikwels 'n parafrase is. Met 'n terugvertaal na die Hebreeus kom jy dus dikwels nie by die grondteks uit nie, maar by die vertalers se interpretasie van die grondteks.
- Die teks van die Septuagint is dikwels langer as die Masoretiese teks.

**Op grond hiervan het ek hierdie artikels versamel, sodat u goed kan sien wat die Septuagint is.**

## 1. Did the Apostles Favor the Septuagint?

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[Did the Apostles Favor the Septuagint? – Purely Presbyterian]

Why did the New Testament writers quote from the Septuagint (LXX)? Did they favor the Septuagint over the original Hebrew text of the Old Testament? Is every Old Testament quotation in the New Testament taken from the Septuagint? Should our translations use the Septuagint instead of the Hebrew where the meanings diverge? These are not new questions. Theologians and Bible scholars have been discussing this for centuries. Richard Muller writes:

"Many of the late sixteenth and seventeenth century Protestant writers devoted considerable space to the refutation of claims made by Roman theologians and polemicists concerning the inspiration of the Septuagint, given both its widespread use in the ancient world and by the writers of the New Testament and its congruence with the text and canon of the Vulgate." [1]

Even to this day the Eastern Orthodox churches continue to consider the Septuagint (LXX) authentic and inspired, rather than the Hebrew Masoretic Text (MT). [2] A recent scholarly work by Møgens Müller describes the authority and authenticity of the text of the LXX as "*fully on a par with the Hebrew Bible*" and further argues that "*the Septuagint is extensively used in the New Testament writings, whereby it—and not the Hebrew Bible (the Masoretic text)—is the most obvious candidate for the title of the first Bible of the Church.*" [3] On another front, closer to home for Western Evangelicals,

some recent English translations depart from the Masoretic Text in a number of places in favor of the LXX reading [4] (*e.g.* Gen. 47:21, 49:10; Deut. 32:43; Judges 14:15, 16:13-14; 1 Sam. 1:24, 14:41; 2 Sam. 7:16; etc.).

A common assumption underlying these views is that the OT text developed or changed over time, and that since the LXX was translated from an early edition of the Hebrew OT, it is more accurate than the later Masoretic Text. [5] Another primary reason given for the superiority of the LXX over the MT is that "*some of the citations taken from the Old Testament and found in the New mainly use the Septuagint text.*" [6]

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However, these traditions run counter to the Reformed doctrine of Scripture, summarized by the Westminster Confession of Faith:

"The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentical; so as in all controversies of religion the Church is finally to appeal unto them…" (WCF 1:8).

Thus the Old Testament in Hebrew, together with the New Testament in Greek, and those only, are immediately inspired and authoritative.

## Statement of the Question.

Historical-critical arguments and implications regarding the Septuagint may seem overwhelming with all of the scholarly work being done regarding it. However, laymen can be assured that the original Hebrew Old Testament, that is reflected in their English translation of the Masoretic Text, has indeed been kept pure and entire by the **singular care and providence** of God and is "*profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works*" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

There are many complex aspects to an historical, critical, and theological understanding of the LXX and many potential implications and challenges it may pose to the authenticity of the Masoretic Text, but this essay will only focus on one of them. We will not discuss the Apocryphal books of the LXX vs. the Hebrew canon of the MT, nor specific textual variants within the OT. Our focus will be a general overview on how Christians should understand the use of the Septuagint in the New Testament. Why should the Hebrew Masoretic Text be the final appeal in all controversies when the inspired and infallible writers quoted from the LXX more than they did from the Hebrew text, sometimes despite the meaningful differences between them? Does this mean that the LXX is more authoritative than, or equally authoritative with, the MT? Or does it imply the authority of the church to identify or declare a normative text of Scripture?

Before addressing the use of the LXX by the NT writers, we must first consider the origins and reliability of the LXX, and whether what we call the LXX today is the same that existed in the time of the Apostles.

## The Origins & Reliability of the LXX.

The Pentateuch was translated by 70 (or 72) scholars around the mid 3rd century BC, while the remaining books were translated, edited, and revised by various people over the next three centuries. History leaves few details about this latter part of the development of what we now know as "the Septuagint." [7] This means that the LXX is not "*a single, cohesive*

*work,*" and "*failure to comprehend the plurality of the translations that make up the LXX can result in misleading conclusions.*" [8] The quality and style varies significantly between portions of the LXX. Some parts appear to be more literal while others are more paraphrastic of the original Hebrew. The Encyclopaedia Judaica concludes that "*what we term the Septuagint is in fact an almost accidental gathering together of texts from diverse sources.*" [9]

Although there are extant older fragments of the OT in Greek, the Encyclopedia continues, "*For the most part, our earliest texts for this Greek material derive from codices from the third and fourth centuries [A.D.]; in particular, Codex Vaticanus, Codex Alexandrinus, and Codex Sinaiticus.*" These may or may not be good exemplars of the OT Greek translations of that time period. But even so, being contemporaneous with Jerome (347-420), his testimony about the unreliability of the LXX at that time suggests the improbability of reconstructing the LXX today (such that it precisely matches any of the Greek translations available in the first century when the New Testament was written). We will examine Jerome's thought on this subject below. By then, the Greek versions may have been edited in some parts to match the Greek New Testament where the latter was intending to paraphrase the Hebrew and apply it in a renewed way. [10] Moreover, as Edward Leigh (1602-1671) observed, God has not guaranteed to preserve anything but the authentic original language text of Scripture:

"That ancient and true translation of the Septuagint is corrupted and violated, which (as Jerome saith [*Letter 112*]) was agreeable to the Hebrew, but so is not the Greek copy now extant, which is full of corruptions, and seemeth to be a mixt and confused translation of many.

"If the Seventy, as well as the Hebrew, had been authentical, the Lord would have been careful to have kept it pure and uncorrupt unto our days, as well as he hath done the Hebrew. There is indeed a Greek edition extant, which goeth under the name of the Seventy; but **Whitaker** saith that the true Seventy is lost, and that this which we now have is mixt and miserably corrupted." [11]

Lutheran Scholastic theologian **Johann Gerhard** (1582-1637), likewise observed, "*we cannot attribute authentic authority, however, to that Greek translation nor equate it with the Hebrew text…because first, it is a translation and, therefore, is not authentic nor does it have the same authority as the Hebrew text.*" [12] Again, in his 7th argument against the authentic authority of the LXX:

"Origen, Lucian, Hesychius, and Jerome already began to correct the Septuagint translation. How, then, was it free of errors? And who would believe that, though it contracted corruption in its first three hundred years, it remained uncorrupted for the other thirteen hundred years? Justin Martyr: '*Your teachers have removed many complete passages of those Scriptures in their entirety from the translation of the elders who were with Ptolemy. Those passages show clearly that He who was crucified is both God and man and that His crucifixion and death were foretold*' (*Dialogus cum Tryphone*, ch. 71)—a fact that he proves in the same book with several examples." [13]

Prominent Reformed Scholastic, **Bernardinus De Moor** (1709-1780), writing in the period of Late Orthodoxy, also noted that,

"the super-abounding errors of this version [LXX] are evident, in its less suitable expression of the sense, addition, subtraction, mutation, through an incorrect reading of the letters, through incorrect punctuation, signification of the words, inverted construction of the words, *etc.*, just as Bellarmine himself acknowledges, [14] and demonstrates that this Version is now corrupted in a variety of ways, and that it is no longer extant in its integrity; so that it is not now safe to emend the Hebrew or Latin texts out of the Greek codices. But a consideration of those errors, which defile this Version, teaches that a great part of those is to be ascribed to the Interpreters themselves; to which, nevertheless, far more were able to be added thereafter by injury of time, blindness and sleepiness of scribes, *etc.*" [15]

From these observations it is clear that although the LXX which the Apostles used may have been an accurate translation, it was not preserved, but was subjected to substantial corruption over time. We therefore cannot say the LXX as it exists today is the same LXX the Apostles used. Much less can we claim the current LXX is authoritative based on the Apostles' usage of it. Having briefly considered the origins and reliability of the LXX, we now turn to the use of the LXX by the NT writers.

## Apostolic Use of the Septuagint in the New Testament.

For a long time scholars have attempted to quantify the New Testament quotations of the Old, and to what degree they conform to the locution of either the LXX, the MT, or are paraphrased from either or both by the NT writer. Yet this is a notoriously difficult task. How many times the NT authors quote the OT depends on what constitutes a quotation. [16] It is not always obvious whether something is an intentional quotation, allusion, or reference. What constitutes an allusion? What constitutes a quotation? Exegetes may give different answers. Are semantic differences, which are not contrary to the sense, to be counted as true differences? "*It is difficult to give an accurate figure since the variation in use ranges all the way from a distant allusion to a definite quotation introduced by an explicit formula stating the citation's source.*" [17] Typically what follows the phrase "*it is written*" is some form of quotation, but all references are not necessarily preceded by such an explicit formula. Moreover, when it comes to quotations of the OT in the NT, we are not simply considering copying practices, but rather citation practices—and that from one language to another. The divine author of Scripture, through the human penman, may alter the OT terminology in the act of quoting it in the NT without contradiction or inconsistency.

De Moor conceded that "*the citations of the Old Testament in the New Testament quite frequently agree with the Septuagint, even in passages where the Greek Version appears to turn from the Hebrew verity.*" Yet he assures us that this is not consistently the case, since the Apostles "*sometimes recede somewhat both from the Hebrew text and from the Septuagint Version: often also, with the Septuagint abandoned, they adhere closely to the Hebrew text.*" After giving examples of each, he continues:

"When the Writers of the New Testament follow the Septuagint, they do not do it so that they might procure authenticity for this Version; but so that in the same sense, and with the substance adduced more than the words, or words not fit for the scope, they might accommodate themselves unto the common usage and tongue: and so that they might turn from the minds of their hearers that suspicion that they either impose upon the cited oracles, and twist them unto their own opinion; or that the Version is not anywhere correct and is to be altogether rejected, of which Version they had been making use to that time, and from which alone they had drawn the mysteries of religion." [18]

**Frederic Spanheim** (1600-1649) likewise observed,

"It is to be noted that the Evangelists followed the Septuagint Version in a great many things, which was both of the greatest authority among the Hellenists, and at the disposal of many, when it was able to be done with the substance of the Prophetic words unharmed, both so that they might show their liberty, and so that they might not in a matter trivial and indifferent furnish any occasion of scandal to the weak, and of cavils to the wicked." [19]

The Apostles and Evangelists were very cognizant of the status and challenges the young fledgling Church would face. They deliberately avoided undermining a trusted and useful translation where it did not substantially affect exegesis and application of biblical truth. Further, while the Jews were committed with the oracles of God (Rom. 3:2) regarding **the formal preservation of the Hebrew text**, they remained in unbelief, "*their minds were blinded,*" and a veil remained upon their hearts in the interpretation and understanding of the Old Testament (2 Cor. 3:14-16). Therefore, it is likely that the Apostles were also careful of putting Gentile converts in a position of over-reliance on unbelieving Jewish scholars (who were also their persecutors), as Dr. Edward F. Hills wrote:

"Such an emphasis on the Hebrew would have been harmful to the Gentile churches which had just been formed. It would have brought these Gentile Christians into a position of dependence upon the unbelieving Jewish rabbis, on whose learning they would have been obliged to rely for an understanding of the Hebrew Old Testament." [20]

The Apostles referenced the LXX because it was widely used at the time, not because they believed it was infallible. Even where it is a highly dynamic paraphrase, the NT writers quoted it when the meaning aligned with the Hebrew text. However, there are also many places where they quoted from the Hebrew text, giving their own translation instead (compare Mat. 2:15 with Hos. 11:1; John 19:37 with Zech. 12:10; Mat. 2:18 with Jer. 31:15; 1 Cor. 15:54 with Isa. 25:8; Mark 15:34 with Psalm 22:1). [21] In many places the LXX is not a formal translation of the original Hebrew text, but rather an interpretation or paraphrase (sometimes of obscure Hebrew idioms). [22] Through the Holy Spirit, the Apostles infallibly discerned when these non-literal renderings were none-the-less accurately purveying the original intent. Also, in many places, the NT penmen used the OT Greek translation to draw out a meaning from the text that was initially latent in the original Hebrew. [23] "*The New Testament contains the Holy Spirit's commentary on the message and teaching of the Old Testament.*" [24]

## Jerome's Preference for the Hebrew.

Augustine (354-430) and Jerome (347-420) **exchanged letters** wherein they debated the authority and reliability of the LXX. While Augustine affirmed that the extant Hebrew was the pure Word of God, he also held that the LXX was likewise inspired, even in its differences with the Hebrew, and that in so doing, the Spirit provided a more Messianic interpretation in preparation for Christ's coming (City of God 18.43-45). Due to this, as well as the apostolic use and wide circulation of the LXX, he believed it was to be preferred above the Hebrew text for translation into Latin (Letter 71).

Jerome responded that the original form of the LXX had been revised and edited such that by his time, "*you will scarcely find more than one manuscript here and there which has not these interpolations*" (Letter 112). In his **Prologue of Job**, he clarified that his motive of translating from Hebrew "*was not to censure the ancient translation, but that those passages in it which are obscure, or those which have been omitted, or at all events, through the fault of copyists have been corrupted, might have light thrown upon them by our translation.*" (NPNF2, 6:491). In his *Apology Against Rufinus*, Jerome defended the primacy of the Hebrew by enumerating several examples where the Hebrew text of the Old Testament was quoted by the Apostles in the New Testament, rather than the LXX. He continued:

"I do not say this in order to aim a blow at the seventy translators; but I assert that the Apostles of Christ have an authority superior to theirs. Wherever the Seventy agree with the Hebrew, the Apostles took their quotations from that translation; but, where they disagree, they set down in Greek what they had found in the Hebrew." [25]

In a letter to "*a lady of Gaul named Algasia*" in answer to "*eleven questions which she had submitted to him,*" Jerome laid down the general rule:

*"*Whenever the prophets and Apostles quote testimonies from the Old Testament, one must note quite carefully that they did not follow the words but the sense. Wherever the Septuagint translators differ from the Hebrew, one must note that they have expressed the Hebrew sense in their own words." [26]

## The Reformation.

Drawing from Jerome, Francis Turretin (1623-1687) summarized the Reformed Orthodox view of the apostolic use of the Septuagint:

"The Apostles used this version [the LXX] not because they believed it to be authentic and divine, but because it was then the most used and most universally received and because (where a regard for the sense and truth was preserved) they were unwilling either rashly to dispute or to create a doubt in the minds of the more weak, but by a holy prudence left unchanged what when changed would give offense, especially when it would answer their purpose. However, they did this in such a manner that sometimes when it seemed necessary, when the version of the Septuagint seemed to be not only unsuitable but untrue, they preferred the source (as Jerome says). This can easily be gathered from a comparison of Mat. 2:15 with Hos. 11:1; John 19:37 with Zech. 12:10; Jer. 31:15 with Mat. 2:18; Isa. 25:8 with 1 Cor. 15:54.

"The quotations in the New Testament from the Septuagint are not authentic *per se* (or because they were translated by the seventy from Hebrew into Greek), but *per accidens* inasmuch as they were drawn into the sacred context by the evangelists under the influence of the Holy Spirit." [27]

The use of the LXX by the NT does not mean that the version as a whole is more authoritative than the MT. Just as Paul's citation of pagan philosophers (*e.g.* Acts 17) does not mean that those authors were inspired, so Paul's use of a translation does not *de facto* make it authentic and inspired.

Throughout his commentary, John Owen gives detailed attention to the use of the LXX in the book of Hebrews, which he summarizes in three points:

"1) That the penmen of the New Testament do not oblige themselves unto that translation [the LXX], but in many places do precisely render the words of the original text, where the translation differs from it.

"2) That they do oftentimes express the sense of the testimony which they quote in words of their own, neither agreeing with that translation nor exactly answering the original Hebrew.

"3) That sundry passages have been unquestioningly taken out of the New Testament, and inserted into that translation; which I have elsewhere proved by undeniable instances." [28]

**Thomas Cartwright** (1535-1603) assures us:

"We are able to justify every place cited out of the 70 by the Apostles and Evangelists to be agreeable with the Hebrew, and (in some diversity of words) to have the same sense; at the least to have no sense repugnant to that in the Hebrew: which is manifest by this, that where the 70 differed in sense, there they leaving the 70, whom they so desirously followed (for support of the Gentiles acquainted therewith) follow the Hebrew text. And as this is manifest by experience, so it is observed expressly of Jerome." [29]

Johann Gerhard, likewise drawing on Jerome, stated:

"The evangelists and Apostles in the New Testament follow the Septuagint translation in quoting statements from the Old Testament '*because at that time that translation had been published among the nations*,' as Jerome points out in his commentary on Genesis 47. Jerome, however, sets down this rule: '*Whenever the prophets and Apostles quote testimonies from the Old Testament, one must note quite carefully that they did not follow the words but the sense. Wherever the Septuagint translators differ from the Hebrew, one must note that they have expressed the Hebrew sense in their own words*' (Epistle 121 *ad Algasiam*)." [30]

In response to **Cardinal Belarmine**'s argument that the Apostle Paul's quotation of the LXX of Psalm 19:4 in Romans 10:18 indicates the Hebrew Masoretic is corrupt and impure, Gerhard writes:

"Not only here [Ps. 19:4] but also in many other places in the New Testament, Christ and the Apostles quote statements from the Old Testament not according to the wording of the Hebrew text but according to the Septuagint translation, as Jerome teaches (*Quaest. super Genes.*, c. 46). From this, however, one cannot and should not infer that the Hebrew text is not authentic nor that we must go back from the streams to the sources. After all, first, who are we when compared with Christ, the master of Scripture, and with the Apostles, who were moved by the immediate inbreathing of the Holy Spirit?

"Second, though they do not always follow the actual words, nevertheless they do retain the purest sense and intention. *cf.* Jerome, Epistle 121 *ad Algasiam…*

"Furthermore, it is one thing to translate Scripture, but it is another to cite a passage from Scripture. Even the teachers of our Church in their disputations draw statements of Scripture from the Latin Vulgate version, yet they do not thereby claim that it is authentic; rather, as necessity demands, they appeal to the Hebrew sources.

"In addition, the nature of the Greek version today is different from what it formerly was, because that Greek version of the Old Testament that exists today either is not the version of the Septuagint translators or has been corrupted and vitiated in many ways.

"Finally, they did not quote statements of Scripture from the Greek version for the purpose of claiming that the Hebrew sources were contaminated and muddied, but because the Greek version was at that time the most used and the most widely accepted. Jerome, *Quaest. super Genesin*: '*Observe this in general, that whenever the holy Apostles or apostolic men speak to the people, they often use those testimonies that then were widely published among the Gentiles, namely, through the Septuagint translation.'"* [31]

## May the LXX be used to correct the Hebrew?

The **Formula Consensus Helvetica** (1675) affirms in canon I, that due to God's "*singular grace and goodness*" the Church "*has, and will have to the end of the world (2 Pet 1:19), a 'sure word of prophecy' and 'Holy Scriptures' (2 Tim 3:15), from which, though heaven and earth pass away, 'the smallest letter or the least stroke of a pen will not disappear by any means' (Matt 5:18).*" Then the Formula applies this specifically to the extant Hebrew apographa (*i.e.* the Masoretic Text) in canon II:

"But, in particular, The Hebrew original of the OT which we have received and to this day do retain as handed down by the Hebrew Church, '*who had been given the oracles of God*' (Rom 3:2), is, not only in its consonants, but in its vowels—either the vowel points themselves, or at least the power of the points—not only in its matter, but in its words, inspired by God. It thus forms, together with the Original of the NT the sole and complete rule of our faith and practice; and to its standard, as to a Lydian stone, all extant versions, eastern or western, ought to be applied, and wherever they differ, be conformed."

Then, in canon III, the Formula rebukes those who, contrary to the aforementioned doctrine, would advocate for amending the extant Hebrew text "*from the versions of the LXX and other Greek versions, the Samaritan Pentateuch, by the Chaldaic Targums, or even from other sources.*" Canon III continues:

"They go even to the point of following the corrections that their own rational powers dictate from the various readings of the Hebrew Original itself—which, they maintain, has been corrupted in various ways; and finally, they affirm that besides the Hebrew edition of the present time, there are in the versions of the ancient interpreters which differ from our Hebrew

text, other Hebrew Originals. Since these versions are also indicative of ancient Hebrew Originals differing from each other, they thus bring the foundation of our faith and its sacred authority into perilous danger." [32]

Lutheran bibliology is entirely compatible with the Reformed on this point, as Gerhard wrote, this would be to judge "*the source from the streams*" and to determine "*the norm and rule from the square that the norm and rule have drawn.*" [33] This is backwards. We do not determine if a ruler is straight by comparing it with a hand-drawn line, but the other way around. The Hebrew OT is the rule whereby all translations, including the LXX, are to be judged. Whatever utility the LXX may have, we utterly deny that it may be used to correct the original Hebrew, which was **dictated** by the Holy Ghost, and kept pure in all ages by his **singular care and providence**.

## The Value of the Septuagint.

Despite the ways in which the LXX can be misused, we must not fail to note where it remains valuable. De Moor writes how important it was for preparing Hellenistic Jews and God-fearing Gentiles for understanding the Old Testament and its fulfillment in Christ, as preached by the Apostles:

"Although it is disgracefully stained with errors and polluted with fables, to the present day it is not without its manifold uses…it paved the way for the preaching of the Apostles, and in this Version the Gentiles, in a tongue known to them, were able to read those things that were preached by the Apostles, that were formerly preached by the Prophets: while many that had already previously read the Books of Moses and of the Prophets, having in a certain measure been prepared in this manner, were more easily receiving what was announced by the Apostles." [34]

Second, the LXX is very important as a source of lexical information for the meaning of Greek terms. The New Testament may use certain Greek words a limited number of times. But upon consultation with the use of those words in the LXX, their meaning is made more clear. At the same time, it is a tool which may help exegetes determine the possible meaning of difficult Hebrew words and idioms. Understanding how the LXX and other ancient versions translated the Hebrew can shed light on the meaning of the original Hebrew. [35]

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[1] Richard Muller, Post Reformation Reformed Dogmatics, vol. 2, p. 432.

[2] By "original" we mean what the Reformed Orthodox meant (not the revisionist, Warfieldian meaning), that is, as Turretin stated: "*we do not mean the autographs written by the hand of Moses, of the Prophets, and of the Apostles, which certainly do not now exist. We mean their apographs [copies] which are so called because they set forth to us the word of God in the very words of those who wrote under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit.*" *cf.* our article on **The Preservation of Scripture** & Dr. Theodore Letis, **The Protestant Dogmaticians and the Late Princeton School on the Status of the Sacred Apographa**.

[3] Møgens Müller, **The First Bible of the Church: A Plea for the Septuagint**. Engaging with this work, Emanuel Tov notes that arguments for the extant LXX being "*closer to the text used by the early Christians*" are unpersuasive, in part because "*the quotations from the Septuagint in the New Testament often differ from the known manuscripts of the Septuagint.*" (***The Status of the Masoretic Text in Modern Text Editions of the Hebrew Bible*** in The Canon Debate, ed. Lee Martin McDonald and James A. Sanders, p. 240, fn. 31).

[4] The English Standard Version (ESV) **Preface** admits: "*In exceptional, difficult cases, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Septuagint, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Syriac Peshitta, the Latin Vulgate, and other sources were consulted to shed possible light on the text, or, if necessary, to support a divergence from the Masoretic text.*"

[5] Evangelical scholar Dr. **Edward Glenny**, in the Gospel Coalition's journal Themelios, writes:

"Textual scholars are convinced that although the LXX is primarily a translation and, in some of its forms, a revision of the original Greek text, in some of the instances where the LXX disagrees with the MT it preserves an earlier form of the Hebrew than the MT."

Yet in the footnote, candidly admits:

"Determining such things involves retroversion of the LXX to attempt to reconstruct its Hebrew ***Vorlage*** in order to compare it with other Hebrew texts. The process is complex, and it is often difficult to determine if differences between the MT and LXX are the result of a different *Vorlage* or result from some other factor, such as the technique of the translator." (***The Septuagint and Biblical Theology***, Themelios, v. 41, i. 2).

On the other hand, it is evident how a robust and confessional doctrine of Scripture would lead Christian scholars and churchmen to approach this issue very differently.

[6] **Hilarion Alfeyev**, Orthodox Christianity, Volume II: Doctrine and Teaching of the Orthodox Church, (New York: St. Vladimir Seminary Press, 2012) p. 34. Cited from **The Septuagint vs. the Masoretic Text** by Fr. John Whiteford.

[7] Travis Bohlinger, **The Origin of the LXX**, Logos Academic Blog. "*[The Septuagint] was translated from Hebrew over several centuries, and the translations began to be revised shortly after they were completed.*" (Edward Glenny, ***The Septuagint and Biblical Theology***, Themelios, v. 41, i. 2, fn. 15). See also "**On the Invention and Problem of the term Septuagint**" by Dr. Peter Williams at the Evangelical Theological Society gathering in 2016. Also "**Why I Don't Believe In The Septuagint**" by Dr. Peter Williams.

[8] Travis Bohlinger, **The Influence of the LXX**, Logos Academic Blog. Similarly, Dr. Melvin Peters observes that there is often "*more than one form of the text in a single book.*" (**Translating the Old Greek Bible (The Septuagint): An Inconvenient Witness to Biblical History**, 16:20)

[9] Sarna, Nahum; Snaith, Norman; Greenspoon, Leonard; Harkins, Franklin; Harkins, Angela; Grossfeld, Bernard; Huehnergard, John; Weidmann, Frederick; Stone, Michael; Sasson, Ilana; Markon, Isaak; Cassuto, Umberto; Loewe, Raphael; Simonsen, David; Fox, Everett; Zimels, Abraham; Grossman, Avraham; Altmann, Alexander; Avishur, Isaac; Hummel, Horace; Cogan, Mordechai; Sperling, S.; Berlinblau, Jacques; Wacholder, Ben; Rabinowitz, Louis; Enslin, Morton; Hirschberg, Ha. "*Bible.*" Encyclopaedia Judaica. **Greek: The Septuagint**.

[10] This theory is frequently advanced by John Owen in his Commentary on Hebrews. *cf.* Owen on Heb. 1:6; 1:8-9; 2:13a; 3:7-11; 3:15; 4:7; & 10:5-7. While not limited to the book of Hebrews, more research in light of modern evidence (and confessional presuppositions) needs to be done on this topic.

[11] **Edward Leigh**, Body of Divinity, p. 75. *cf.* William Whitaker, Disputations on Holy Scripture, Q. 2, ch. 3, *Of the Greek Version by the Seventy Translators of the Hebrew Books*.

[12] Johann Gerhard, Theological Commonplaces vol. 2, **On the Nature of Theology and Scripture**, Kindle position 1324.

[13] Gerhard, *ibid.*, Kindle position 1327.

[14] Robert Belarmine (1542-1621), book II *de Verbo Dei*, chapter VI, *Controversiis*, tome I, columns 102-105. In his study of Franciscus Junius' hermeneutics, Douglas Judisch correctly observes: "*Junius distinguishes between the version supposedly executed by the legendary seventy translators of the Old Testament and the Septuagint as it existed in his own day (which sometimes, he felt, represented the work of the original translators and sometimes did not).*" **A translation and edition of the *Sacrorum Parallelorum Liber Primus* of Franciscus Junius: a study in sixteenth century hermeneutics** (1979), vol. 2, p. 341.

[15] Bernardinus De Moor, Didactico-Elenctic Theology, vol. 2, ch. 2, sect. 11, p. 211.

[16] Alexander Sperber notes:

"It may at once be said that every part of the N.T. affords evidence of a knowledge of the LXX., and that a great majority of the passages cited from the O.T. are in general agreement with the Greek version. It is calculated by one writer on the subject that, while the N.T. differs from the Masoretic text in 212 citations, it departs from the LXX. in 185; and by another that '*not more than fifty*' of the citations '*materially differ from the LXX.*' On either estimate the LXX. is the principal source from which the writers of the N.T. derived their O.T. quotations." (**New Testament and Septuagint**. Journal of Biblical Literature. Vol. 59, No. 2 (June 1940), pp. 193-293).

Some sources documenting these differences will count examples in favor of the LXX when they really should not. For example, Gal. 3:13 quotation of Deut. 21:23. The LXX explicitly adds "*on a tree*" in v. 23 but the MT does not repeat that the hanging is being done on a tree after previously specifying "*tree*" twice in vv. 22-23. So the Apostle quoting the LXX here is not contrary to the sense or the grammar of the MT at all. Or Heb. 2:12 citing Ps. 22:22—alleging a difference between LXX and MT here is unwarranted; "*will I sing praise to thee*" (LXX) and "*will I praise thee*" (MT) are not divergent in meaning.

In our judgment, Archer & Chirichigno give a balanced and fair analysis of this topic. They divide the OT quotations in the NT into 6 categories (A through F), noting that some NT verses may be assigned to more than one category due to the complexity of determining what constitutes a quotation and that some NT texts may appear to quote more than one OT text at once (p. xi). Summarizing their analysis:

- **64.4% (268)** of the OT quotes in the NT are "*reasonably or completely accurate*" between the MT and LXX and are thus unquestionably immaterial to the statement of the question.
- **7% (33)** "*adhere more closely to the MT than the LXX does, indicating that the apostolic author may have consulted his Hebrew Bible directly in the preparation of his own account or letter.*"
- **11.2% (50)** of the OT quotes in the NT "*quite closely adhere to the wording of the LXX, even where the LXX deviates somewhat (though not so seriously as to distort the real meaning of the Old Testament passage as given in the MT) from the received text in the Hebrew Bible.*"
- **3% (13)** do not precisely match either the MT or the LXX and "*give the impression that unwarranted liberties were taken with the Old Testament text in the light of its context,*" yet "*far from wresting or perverting the original verse, the inspired servant of Jesus brings out in a profound and meaningful way its implications and connotations.*"
- **8% (32)** are not explicitly adduced by the New Testament writers as quotations, yet closely resemble an OT source.
- **6% (22)** "*adhere quite closely to the LXX rendering, even when it deviates somewhat from the MT.*"

Thus, regarding our statement of the question, only these last 22 citations, 6% of the whole, are seemingly problematic. For a good example of how orthodox exegetes have resolved issues in this class of citations *cf.* **Owen on Heb. 11:21**.

[17] Roger Nicole, **Revelation and the Bible: Contemporary Evangelical Thought**, ed. Carl F.H. Henry, p. 137.

[18] De Moor, *ibid.*, pp. 215-216.

[19] *Dubiis Euangelicis*, Part III, Doubt XIX, § 3, on Matthew 3:3, pp. 48-49, cited from De Moor, *ibid.*, p. 216.

[20] Edward F. Hills, Text and Time: A Reformed Approach to New Testament Textual Criticism, p. 94.

[21] Francis Turretin, Institutes of Elenctic Theology II.xiv.vii, vol. 1, p. 129. Archer & Chirichigno explicitly cite 33 citations of this type (Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament: A Complete Survey, p. xxvi, Category C).

[22] *e.g.* **"They pierced my hands and my feet" or "Like a lion my hands and my feet" in Psalm 22:16?**

[23] "*Owen's argument resolved the textual question in a direction favorable to his theological concerns: the original language text of the epistle had been preserved, and the Old Testament citations in the epistle were either translations of the inspired Hebrew original or inspired apostolic paraphrases.*" (Muller, *ibid.*, p. 434).

[24] Gleason L. Archer & Gregory Chirichigno, "*Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament: A Complete Survey*" (2005), p. xxviii.

[25] Apology Against Rufinus, **Book 2**, Section 34, (NPNF2, 3:517).

[26] Jerome, Letter 121, To Algasia, (NPNF2, 6.224). Cited from Gerhard, *ibid.*, Kindle position 857.

[27] Turretin, *ibid.*, p. 129.

[28] John Owen, Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews, on **Heb. 10:5**. *cf.* Owen on Heb. 1:6; 1:8-9; 2:13a; 3:7-11; 3:15; 4:7; & 10:5-7.

[29] Thomas Cartwright, Confutation of the Rhemists' Translation, Glosses, and Annotations on the New Testament, Preface, ans. 50.

[30] Gerhard, *ibid.*, Kindle position 1328. "*The Lord's Penmen in the New Testament do so far yield to the Seventy Interpreters as their difference from the Hebrew is in words and not in sense.*" (Cartwright, Confutation…, p. 642, on Heb. 11:21).

[31] Gerhard, *ibid.*, Kindle position 857.

[32] James Ussher (1581-1656) likewise warned:

"But if in it [Capellus' Critica Sacra] you had taught '*Out of the Samaritan and the Greek LXX variant readings of the Hebrew text can be collected no less than from what you gather from our modern Hebrew Bible*', I could not but say that by far the most dangerous path is opened up by that method of reasoning for the perversion of the true meaning of the Holy Spirit in a thousand passages of Scripture…and he who first tried to block this path would have been likely to receive great favour from a not ungrateful posterity." (Whole Works, vol. 16, p. 222, letter 294. Cited from G.H. Milne, **Has the Bible Been Kept Pure?**, p. 259).

[33] Gerhard, *ibid.*, Kindle position 846.

[34] De Moor, *ibid.*, pp. 226-227.

[35] Owen and other exegetes frequently use it this way in their commentaries. It is likewise made use of in this way by Greek lexicons such as Thayer's.

## 2. CG den Hertog W Aalders DE BETEKENIS VAN DE SEPTUAGINTA VOOR DE BIJBELWETENSCHAP

**42 minuten leestijd**

Opgedragen aan prof. dr. dr. dr. hc Robert Hanhart ter gelegenheid van zijn vijfenzeventigste verjaardag op 6 juli 2000 in dankbaarheid en respect

C.G. den Hertog

In dit opstel wordt de vraag naar de theologische verwerking van ˆeX fenomeen van de Septuaginta aan de orde gesteld. De opbouw is als volgt. Na een schets van de plaats die de Septuaginta in de klassieke studie theologie inneemt, wordt de toegenomen belangstelling voor **De Septuaginta als document van het Jodendom in de hellenistische tijd** voorgesteld. In een excurs krijgt de recente studie van W. Aalders de aandacht, die zij verdient. De groeiende belangstelling voor de Septuaginta heeft haar neerslag in de reeds verschenen en nog te verschijnen literatuur. De Septuaginta blijft echter ook een deel van het tekstgetuigenis van de oudtestamentische bijbeltekst. Onze kennis van de tekstgeschiedenis is in de afgelopen vijftig jaar enorm toegenomen en dit heeft ook de betekenis van de Septuaginta nog eens onderstreept. Wij hebben door de tekstvondsten van de woestijn van Juda en de Septuaginta zicht op de laatste groeifase van het Oude Testament èn op de verwerking van het oudtestamentisch getuigenis.

### De Septuaginta in de theologische studie

Zonder enige twijfel is de Septuaginta voor de gemiddelde student(e) theologie nog steeds een belangrijk begrip. Tenslotte zijn er in de loop van een klassieke studie theologie verschillende gelegenheden om met dit document uit de Oudheid in aanraking te komen.

1. Wie Bijbels Hebreeuws leert, zal op een bepaald ogenblik een kritische editie van de Hebreeuwse Bijbel ter hand nemen. In het bij een wetenschappelijke editie behorende kritische apparaat speelt, naast het materiaal uit de vondsten van de Dode Zee (Qumran e.a.) en de in vergetelheid geraakte kamer voor onbruikbaar

geworden bijbelhandschriften (Geniza) van de synagoge in het oude centrum van Cairo, de Griekse vertaling van de Hebreeuwse Bijbel een belangrijke rol.

Aan de gevallen waarin de Griekse tekst korter schijnt te zijn dan de Hebreeuwse, wordt daarbij traditioneel grotere aandacht besteed dan aan de gevallen waarin het omgekeerde aan de orde is; soms registreert de moderne uitgever ook een inhoudelijke (d.w.z. een kwalitatieve, geen kwantitatieve) variant. In veel gevallen wordt het verschil tussen de Hebreeuwse en de Griekse tekst door een uitgever niet slechts

(neutraal) geregistreerd, maar ook gewaardeerd. Zo is het altiians in de verschillende edities van de Württembergische Bibelanstalt in Stuttgart, die in drie verschillende bewerkingen sinds het begin van deze eeuw toonaangevend zijn geweest voor het oudtestamentisch bijbelonderzoek'. De grote editie van het Hebrew University Bible Project, waarvan inmiddels twee delen volledig beschikbaar zijnˆ, heeft een geheel andere opzet: Het materiaal wordt over verschillende apparaten verdeeldˆ. Een waardering van het verzamelde materiaal ten opzichte van de masoretische tekst (in deze editie overigens niet ontnomen aan de beroemde Codex Leningradensis maar aan de zgn. Aleppo-codex) in de zin van superieur of inferieur, vindt nergens plaats en dat maakt deze editie voor minder geoefende lezers waarschijnlijk moeilijk te gebruiken. Voor gevorderden is zij daarentegen een must.

Wanneer tijdens of kort na de voorbereiding op het tentamen Bijbels Hebreeuws ook nog de bestudering van de inleiding in de tekstkritiek van het Oude Testament van Ernst Würthwein", het hoofdstuk over de tekst van het Oude Testament in het Bijbels Handboek van Emanuel Tov' of de handleiding voor de omgang met de Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia van Reinhard Wonneberger* op het programma staat, wordt al spoedig duidelijk dat achter het algemene etiket 'Griekse vertaling van het Oude Testament' een veelzijdig fenomeen schuilgaat. Over het algemeen genomen blijft er na het met succes afgelegde tentamen Bijbels Hebreeuws waarschijnlijk niet veel meer hangen dan een paar trefwoorden als 'Targumhypothese' (P. Kahle) versus 'Urseptuaginta' (P. de Lagarde), 'Origenes', 'Aquila', 'Theodotion' en 'Symmachos'.

2. De naam Origenes keert spoedig terug, wanneer de oude kerkgeschiedenis bestu-

deerd wordt. Opmerkelijk genoeg blijkt dan dat de man die zo'n enorme zorg aan de tekst van de Bijbel besteedde', in zijn uitleg - althans vanuit hedendaags perspectief gezien; zijn grote aandacht voor de betrouwbaarheid van de bijbeltekst maakt echter wel duidelijk dat we hem met een dergelijk ongedifferentieerd oordeel zeker geen recht doen! - met diezelfde tekst een loopje nam; hij geldt immers als een van de exponenten van de allegorische exegese*.

3. Een derde gelegenheid waarbij tijdens de theologische studie met de Septuaginta kennis gemaakt wordt, is die van de zgn. begripsexegese, de behandeling van bijbelse trefwoorden, waarbij voor wat het Nieuwe Testament betreft regelmatig blijkt dat centrale begrippen in dit deel van de Bijbel vanuit het Oude Testament via het intermediair van de Griekse vertaling zijn aangeleverd. Dit geldt met name voor begrippen die op de cultus betrekking hebben en voor meer abstracte, maar wel centrale begrippen als 'gerechtigheid', 'verlossing' en dergelijke.

In de praktijk overheerst aan het einde van een gemiddelde studie theologie naar mijn gevoel evenwel de indruk dat de Septuaginta hoofdzakelijk benut kan worden om de masoretische tekst te 'repareren'.

De Septuaginta als document van het Jodendom in de hellenistische tijd

In het moderne wetenschappelijke onderzoek kan inmiddels een toenemende belangstelling voor de 'theologie van de Septuaginta' waargenomen worden. In de kring van de nieuwtestamentische wetenschap wordt steeds meer belang gehecht aan de Septuaginta omdat men hoopt hier materiaal te vinden voor de beschrijving van de achtergrond van het Nieuwe Testament'. Onder de indruk van het onbeschrijflijke gebeuren van Ausch-

witz dringt gaandeweg duidelijker door hoe gevaariijk het was, dat men het Nieuwe Testament van zijn Joodse wortels losgemaakt en als een document gelezen heeft dat - op zijn best - vanuit de vooronderstellingen van een (/ze/Jen!-)christelijke traditie legitiem begrepen kon worden. Daarom wordt nu allerwege de Joodse wereld ten tijde van het Nieuwe Testament bestudeerd en bij de schaarste aan bronnen uit de tijd vóór de Misjna ligt het voor de hand, dat men probeert uit de Septuaginta - niet slechts centrale theologische 'begrippen', maar - een eigen 'theologie' te destilleren. Het gaat hier uiteraard om meer dan alleen een begripsonderzoek; het streven is, zo mogelijk een samenhangend beeld van het theologische concept - of, bij de veelheid van vertalers waarschijnlijker: de theologische concepten - van de Griekse vertalers op te sporen.

De eerste aanzetten voor een dergelijk onderzoek stammen opmerkelijk genoeg uit het Duitsland van het Derde Rijk. In de kring van medewerkers aan het theologische woordenboek op het Nieuwe Testament van Gerhard Kittel werd de Septuaginta voor het al eerder genoemde begripshistorisch onderzoek gebruikt. Hier was het niet ongebruikelijk een tegenstelling te postuleren tussen een Palestijns Jodendom aan de ene en een 'hellenistisch' Jodendom aan de andere kant'". Anders dan bij de meeste oudtestamentisch geschoolde auteurs (zoals bijvoorbeeld Rudolf Meyer, Gerhard von Rad of Walther Zimmerli) het geval was, werd daarbij in de bijdragen van een Georg Bertram, nieuwtestamenticus in GieBen, een onmiskenbaar antisemitische tendens zichtbaar". Maar ook van de kant van het eigenlijke Septuaginta-onderzoek was er belangstelling voor dit soort vragen. Ten onzent was het de grote Isaac Leo Seeligmann die de aandacht op hellenistisch-joodse theologie vestigde, zoals die in de woordkeuze en in de weergave van sommige bijbelplaatsen in de Griekse vertaling zichtbaar wordt'ˆ.

Vandaag geniet het thema van een 'theologie van de Septuaginta' opnieuw brede belang-

stelling. Het traceren van een theologisch concept in een vertaling is evenwel niet eenvoudig. Een vertaler ontwikkelt zijn inzichten en opvattingen immers niet vrij; hij is gebonden aan de tekst die hij dient te vertalen". Stellig zijn er aanwijzingen dat hij nu en dan bewust voor een bepaalde weergave koos; het is echter heel moeilijk daarvoor 'harde' bewijzen te leveren. In de praktijk geldt de regel dat we ons zolang van een 'theologische' verklaring van de Griekse vertaling van een bepaalde plaats dienen te onthouden, als er nog andere, niet-theologische verklaringsmogelijkheden - bijvoorbeeld een van de masoretische tekst afwijkende Vorlage - bestaan. Hier biedt de door de Finse Septuaginta-onderzoeker I. Soisalon-Soininen ontwikkelde methode van onderzoek naar de zog. 'vertaaltechniek' een heilzame correctie'''. Deze onderzoeker ging bewust niet - zoals dat vroeger, mede in verband met de eigen optiek van het begripshistorisch onderzoek, te doen

gebruikelijk was - uit van een vergelijking van de door een vertaler gehanteerde vertaalequivalenten voor bepaalde Hebreeuwse begrippen (de lexicografische aanpak), maar koos als punt van vertrek syntactische verschijnselen waarin de Hebreeuwse en de Griekse taal zich zozeer onderscheiden dat een Griekse vertaler onmogelijk woord-voor-woord te werk kon gaan (zoals hij dat normaal placht te doen)'^. Uit dergelijk onderzoek in verschillende bijbelboeken (men gaat er van uit dat een bijbelboek in de regel door één vertaler vertaald werd; de twaalf Kleine Profeten werden daarbij waarschijnlijk als één bijbelboek behandeld, de 'megillot', de feestrollen - Ruth, Hooglied, Prediker, Klaagliederen en Esther - gezien het verschillende karakter van de afzonderlijke vertalingen blijkbaar niet) komt heel duidelijk het verschil in stijl, kwaliteit en competentie tussen de verschillende vertalers / vertalingen naar voren. Hoe scherper nu het profiel van de afzonderlijke vertalers zichtbaar wordt, des te duidelijker wordt ook, welke weergaven in hun vertaling als echte theologische keuzen aangemerkt

mogen worden, resp. welke daarvan tot het repertoire van hun 'standaard-weergaven' behoren'*.

Excurs: W. Aalders, De Septuagint. Brug tussen synagoge en kerk

Het is hier de plaats om op een belangrijke publicatie van het afgelopen jaar te wijzen: dr. W. Aalders, De Septuagint. Brug tussen synagoge en kerk, Heerenveen 1999. De negentigjarige auteur breekt in deze studie een lans voor een theologische beoordeling van de Septuaginta. Bijzondere betekenis heeft voor hem het feit dat hij in zijn jonge jaren in Amsterdam vrijwel naast een later beroemd geworden Joodse Septuaginta-geleerde gewoond heeft: Isaac Leo Seeligmann. Toch hebben zij eikaar nooit persoonlijk ontmoet.

In een korte inleiding wordt het Joodse volk geschetst als een volk waarin messiaans vuur smeult - zichtbaar geworden in de (oprichting van de) staat Israël en in de met het bestaan van deze staat temidden van een overwegend vijandige omgeving samenhangende heftige controverses in de Israëlische maatschappij, inclusief de 'terechtstelling' van Jitschak Rabin als landverrader. Daarna volgt een korte schets van de Septuaginta als document van het alexandrijns-hellenistische Jodendom, waartoe ook Philo van Alexandrië behoorde. Vervolgens komt Aalders bij het eigenlijk theologische gezichtspunt, dat voor hem reden was dit boek te schrijven: De Septuaginta moet als vertaling noodzakelijkerwijs ook een interpretatie zijn.

Hij formuleert zijn hypothese dat de Griekse vertaling uiting gaf aan het zelfverstaan van het diaspora-Jodendom, "als een nieuw geestelijk elan, mogelijk zelfs een pinksterlente. Is er echter een taalkundig bewijs te geven dat in de taal van de Septuagint de echo van zo'n geestelijk reveil doorklinkt? Steeds meer ben ik ervan overtuigd dat in het moderne Septuagint-onderzoek het bewijsmateriaal en de argu-

mentatie daarvoor in zekere mate aanwezig geacht kunnen worden. Degene die door zijn grote geleerdheid en nauwgezet onderzoek als eerste de weg daartoe gewezen heeft, is de Joods-Nederlandse rabbi en filoloog dr. I.L. Seeligmann (1907-1982)" (41).

In verschillende publicaties heeft Seeligmann op dergelijke sporen van interpretatie gewezen, maar hij verklaart deze als een poging om de Schrift te actualiseren, meer dan als het inbrengen van (te postuleren!) hellenistisch-Joodse theologoumena. Aalders komt tot de slotsom dat Seeligmann ervoor teruggeschrokken is, (theologische) consequenties te verbinden aan zijn observaties. "Ondanks het vele en waardevolle

wetenschappelijke materiaal dat de taalgeleerde Seeligmann over de Septuagint-vertaling als historisch document van het hellenistische Jodendom gedurende een bewogen tijd als de derde eeuw voor Christus, naar voren heeft gebracht - moet toch de conclusie zijn dat er van enige concretisering, hoe vaag en aarzelend ook, van een theologische omslag en vernieuwing in het Joodse denken bij hem geen sprake is. Hij stelt wel de mogelijkheid van hellenistische invloed, maar van toepassing en consequenties zijn wij verder verwijderd dan ooit" (48v.). Seeligmann heeft zich na het schrijven van zijn dissertatie - zo Aalders - daarom van het veld van het Septuaginta-onderzoek teruggetrokken. Hij is teruggeschrokken voor een in de Griekse vertaling zichtbaar wordende 'eschatologische doorbraak in de Israëlietische geschiedenis' en wil haar slechts als getuige van - algemene, niet bepaaldelijk hellenistische - Joodse exegese behandelen.

Aalders daarentegen leest de Septuaginta vanuit de theologie van Philo van Alexandrië: "Immers juist daar, waar Seeligmann als trouw zoon van de synagoge de lijnen volgt van de Palestijns-rabbijnse traditie en om die reden overal, waar de Septuagint zwanger is van nieuwe perspectieven, een sterke reserve en zelfs afwijzing laat blijken - juist daar betoont zich Philo als Septuagint-theoloog een rechte Hebreeër, die bereid en in staat is de overgang CEbhar) te maken" (52). Deze Philo ontdekte in een voor het Jodendom zo verwarrende en verwarde tijd 'messiaanse mogelijkheden' in de Egyptische diaspora en deze visie bepaalde de wijze waarop hij de Septuagint las: als bron van een - niet nationaal maar universeel - messianisme. In de thora is het messianisme nauwelijks te vinden; het gaat terug op de verkondiging van de profeten, in het bijzonder op Jesaja. De ontdekking van de eschatologie was het die het volk Israël in deze gistende fase van de wereldgeschiedenis voor de ontbinding bewaard heeft.

Naast de eschatologische stroming en soms in contrast of zelfs conflict met haar, is er ook de meer nationaal getinte apocalyptiek. Zo verklaart Aalders het feit dat het Palestijnse Jodendom onder de geloofsvervolging van Antiochos IV. Epiphanes te lijden had terwijl hun geloofsgenoten buiten Palestina godsdienstvrijheid genoten, uit het mentaliteitsverschil; "een mentaliteitsverschil dat te herleiden is tot het verschil van apocalyptische messiasverwachting én profetisch-eschatologische verwachting. De Seleucidische koningen en de Romeinse overheid zagen de apocalyptisch ingestelde Joden in Palestina als een politiek gevaar, de diaspora-Joden en Samaritanen waren dat volgens hen niet" (64).

De apocalyptiek is het 'radeloze' antwoord van het Joodse volk op de dodelijke crisis in de hellenistische en Romeinse periode. Deze apocalyptiek stond echter in de bredere samenhang van het culturele ontbindingsproces in het oostelijke Middellandse-Zeegebied, waar op verschillende plaatsen met de Joodse apocalyptiek verwante bewegingen opkwamen, die een reactie betekenden op "het verlies van traditionele normen en waarden, het als individu geheel op zichzelf teruggeworpen zijn. Geen geestelijk huis was bestand tegen deze storm in de geschiedenis. Een eclips was opgetreden over alle religiositeit" (73).

In deze uitzichtloze situatie bood de Septuaginta - ook en vooral als verzameling, als selectie, als 'canon' - voor de Joodse gemeenschap een houvast, niet in de laatste plaats omdat de invloedrijke theoloog Philo van Alexandrië aan het van deze Griekse Bijbel uitgaande reveil een machtige stem verleende, een stem die ook ver buiten Alexandrië gehoord werd. Door de ondergang van het Ptolemese rijk in de zeeslag bij Actium kwam er echter aan deze opleving van de hoop op een betere toekomst een abrupt einde. De enorme Joodse gemeenschap van Alexandrië kwam nu onder directe invloed van Rome te staan, waar op dat moment de keizercultus welig tierde. Philo nam deel aan een gezantschap dat bij de keizer in Rome ervoor moest pleiten,

de religieuze privileges van de Joden overeind te houden en hen van deelname aan de officiële keizercultus vrij te stellen. Zijn ervaringen hebben in het vroegere eschatologische optimisme een diepe crisis teweeggebracht. Wij kunnen slechts speculeren dat in deze situatie het boek Daniël - dat in de Alexandrijnse canon niet achterin, bij de Geschriften, maar bij de Grote Profeten ondergebracht is! - voor hem tot een steun heeft kunnen worden omdat hier immers de verwachting van een radicale messiaanse omslag in de geschiedenis gevoed wordt.

In een laatste hoofdstuk behandelt Aalders tenslotte het Nieuwe Testament en kiest hij hier exemplarisch het Evangelie naar de beschrijving van Mattheüs uit. Herhaaldelijk wijst Mattheüs er op dat in het gebeuren van Jezus de Schrift 'vervuld' wordt. Dat wil zeggen: "Gods heilsvoornemen begint tot zijn voltooiing te komen, de voleinding breekt door in de geschiedenis, de tijd heeft onmiskenbaar eschatologisch en apocalyptisch karakter gekregen. Dat wat als schuchter vermoeden al leefde bij Abraham en mogelijk zelfs al bij Henoch en Noach; dat wat in Israels profeten telkens als een geiser omhoogsprong en wat in de apocalyptische literatuur als heimwee uitgeklaagd is - dat is nu zeer nabij gekomen. Ja, voor wie ogen heeft om te zien en oren om te horen is de doorbraak ervan airede waarneembaar" (98). De komst van Jezus als de (door Petrus herkende en beleden) Christus betekende een grote wending, omdat nu hij, die in het Oude Testament - in de Griekse vertaling sterker nog dan in de Hebreeuwse tekst - verkondigd en verwacht werd, gekomen is. Sindsdien lijkt er in de wereld niets veranderd te zijn. "En toch, - toch is door de gebeurtenis, die Mattheüs als eerste ons heeft bericht, iets wezenlijk veranderd. Wij leven wetend of onwetend in het jaar onzes Heren, anno Domini. Wij leven in een wereld die in volstrekte zin 'oud' is geworden en heeft afgedaan. Er is geen Profeet, geen Priester, geen heilsboodschap van hoger orde meer te verwachten" (110).

Het boek van dr. Aalders is ten volle een theologisch boek, een 'worp', een pleidooi. Dat is het wat deze studie zo waardevol maakt. De auteur is geen Septuaginta-specialist - en dat is op vele plaatsen te merken. Regelmatig geeft Aalders posities weer die eenzijdig zijn of achterhaald'ˆ, hij gaat wel erg vrij om met de historische feiten en chronologische verbanden en biedt herhaaldelijk onjuiste achtergrondinformatie.-De betekenis van dit boek lijdt daar nauwelijks onder; wie zich daaraan stoort kan dit euvel op eenvoudige wijze verhelpen: door een van de beschikbare inleidingen in de Septuaginta ter hand te nemen'ˆ.

Gezien deze kwaliteit van theologische these, van omvattende 'worp', wenst men niet alleen de auteur maar ook zijn lezers echter wel competente gesprekspartners toe, hoopt, dat zich op basis van dit boek een gesprek ontwikkelt. En gesprekspartners zijn er! Men denke, terzake van de verstrekkende betekenis van de geloofsvervolging onder Antiochos IV. Epiphanes, aan de prachtige, gedreven studie van Elias Bickermann: Der Gott der Makkabaer".

Terzake van de belangrijke vraag of de Ptolemese overheid bij het ontstaan van de Septuaginta een actieve rol heeft gespeeld, of dat dit aspect in de voorstelling van zaken die de Aristeasbrief geeft, als legendarisch terzijde geschoven dient te worden, heeft zich veertig jaar geleden een diepgaande discussie ontsponnen die van groot belang is voor de bepaling van de betekenis van de Septuagintaˆ".

Terzake van het eschatologiserende karakter van de Griekse vertaling en het verband van Septuaginta, eschatologie en apocalyptiek, valt op dat de naam van R. Hanhart,

de vroegere 'Leiter' van het Göttinger 'Septuaginta-Unternehmen' ontbreekt^'. Zo is te wensen dat het boek van dr. Aalders resonantie vindt bij gesprekspartners, die zijn 'Anliegen' oppakken en bereid zijn, met hem over de theologische betekenis van de Septuaginta na te denken.

Recente ontwikkelingen: groeiende belangstelling voor de Septuaginta

Uit de zojuist geschetste toegenomen belangstelling voor de inhoud van de Griekse vertaling is het te verklaren dat momenteel in verschillende landen aan een vertaling van de Septuaginta gewerkt wordt. In Frankrijk bestaat rond de persoon van M. Harl al geruime tijd een werkgroep die zich met verschillende aspecten van de Septuaginta bezighoudt. Uit deze kring is in het afgelopen decennium zowel een algemene inleiding in de Septuaginta--als ook een volgens inhoudelijke gezichtspunten geordende bibliografie

verschenen-'. Van de vertaling van de Septuaginta in het Frans zijn de delen Genesis tot en met Richteren benevens enkele losse delen reeds verschenen. Voor het engelstalige gebied is de NETS - New English Translation of the Septuagint - gepland, maar ook een compleet commentaar op de Griekse tekst. Onder de auspiciën van het Duitse Bijbelgenootschap worden inmiddels ook de voorbereidingen voor een vertaling van de Septuaginta in het Duits getroffen, een project waarin nieuwtestamentici een aanzienlijke rol zullen spelen.

Ondanks het feit dat het Nederlandse taalgebied op het terrein van het Septuagintaonderzoek bepaald niet ondervertegenwoordigd is, lijkt een Nederlandse vertaling van de Septuaginta om verschillende redenen toch nauwelijks een haalbare kaart. Met het vooruitzicht van drie vertalingen in de gangbare moderne vreemde talen is dat echter ook niet nodig.

Wel is er naar mijn mening dringend behoefte aan een nederlandstalige beknopte inleiding in de Septuaginta die niet op specialisten maar op predikanten, godsdienstleraren en theologiestudenten gericht is. Daarin zou enerzijds een summiere algemene inleiding in de verschillende aspecten van de Griekse vertaling geboden moeten worden die genoeg informatie bevat om de (zeer variërende!) waarde van deze vertaling voor de verschillende bijbelboeken juist in te schatten; anderzijds dient een dergelijk werk aan de hand van concrete voorbeelden een praktische inleiding in de omgang met de - inmiddels langzaam maar zeker zijn voltooiing naderende - Göttinger editie te bieden. Immers, deze monumentale uitgave bevat een schat aan gegevens maar door de uiterst beknopte vorm waarin deze gegevens aangeboden worden, is zij niet eenvoudig te gebruiken.

**Karakter en geschiedenis van de bijbeltekst**

De Griekse vertaling heeft praktische betekenis voor de tekstkritiek van het Oude Testament; zij is daarnaast als 'hermeneutische horizon', tevens van belang voor onze kennis van een belangrijke vormende kracht achter de gedachtenwereld van het Nieuwe Testament. In de derde plaats lijkt me evenwel dat het ook legitiem is om te spreken van een theologisch belang van deze vertaling. Om dit te verduidelijken moeten wij ons kort de geschiedenis van het Oude Testament in de christelijke kerk voor de geest halen^"*.

Het Oude Testament - voor Jezus en zijn leerlingen de Schrift - begon in de vroege christelijke kerk onmiddellijk een probleem te worden, zodra het aantal heidenchristenen toe

ging nemen. Mocht menige Jodenchristen geen toegang tot het Hebreeuwse Oude Testament gehad hebben, deze heidenchristenen hadden ook tot het Griekse Oude Testament geen, ofwel een heel andere toegang. Het conflict hierover werd zelfs onder de leidinggevende gestalten in de christelijke gemeente op zeer controverse wijze gevoerd, zoals het Nieuwe Testament zelf duidelijk laat zien. Uiteindelijk heeft de christelijke kerk het Oude Testament ook als haar heilige Schrift geaccepteerd; het is echter veelzeggend genoeg, dat daarbij niet de Hebreeuwse maar de Griekse (oosters-orthodoxe kerken) of Latijnse (rooms-katholieke) versie van het Oude Testament gezaghebbend werd.

Excurs: Het bijzondere karakter van de Vulgata

De Vulgata kan in dit opzicht overigens slechts gedeeltelijk als een fenomeen sui generis beschouwd worden. Paus Damasus I. (366-384) gaf Hiëronymus opdracht, voor een betrouwbare Latijnse bijbeltekst te zorgen (d.w.z. een soortgelijke doelstelling als rond honderd jaar eerder door Origenes met zijn Hexapla voor de Griekse bijbeltekst nagestreefd werd, die eveneens orde in een verwilderde teksttraditie beoogde te scheppen). De Latijnse bijbelteksten zoals ze in deze tijd in omloop waren, verschilden onderling sterk; dat bemoeilijkte de omgang met de Bijbel in theologie en liturgie (bijvoorbeeld het gebruik van een bijbelcommentaar van de in Noord-Afrika levende Augustinus in Gallië)-\ Hiëronymus' taak bestond erin om, gebaseerd op zijn verhoudingsgewijs omvangrijke kennis van het Hebreeuws en Grieks een verbeterde, d.w.z. van zijn corrupties gereinigde Latijnse bijbeltekst te produceren. De Vetus Latina berustte namelijk - net als alle oude bijbelvertalingen behalve de Syrische Pesjitta - niet op de Hebreeuwse, maar op de alom in de christelijke kerk als geïnspireerd geldende Griekse bijbeltekst. Daardoor dat hij een nieuwe bijbelyertaling produceerde, die niet op de Griekse, maar op de Hebreeuwse tekst baseerde, ging Hiëronymus veel verder dan zijn opdrachtgever bedoeld had. Deze keuze was in zijn tijd overigens heftig omstreden. In de verdediging van zijn vertaalproject (bijv. tegenover Augustinus of Rufinus) argumenteert Hiëronymus, opmerkelijk genoeg, vooral filologisch en niet of nauwelijks theologisch-ˆ*". Om onbekende - wellicht praktische? - redenen heeft de vertaling van Hiëronymus zich in de eeuwen

daarna toch als de gangbare (vandaar de naam: Vulgata) bijbeltekst kunnen etableren. Het feit dat zij op de Hebreeuwse tekst baseerde, heeft daarbij stellig geen rol gespeeld. Daar de kennis van het Hebreeuws in de christelijke kerk in de Middeleeuwen bovendien geheel verloren ging - ook Hiëronymus was in zijn tijd al een uitzondering geweest - , verving de Latijnse bijbeltekst in ieder geval de facto de Hebreeuwse tekst.

Voor de Griekse tekst van het Oude Testament bestond daarbij om historische redenen - de lange overleverings-èn bewerkingsgeschiedenis van deze versie in de eerste eeuwen na haar ontstaan - geen algemeen erkende norm; de overwegend middeleeuwse handschriften die heden ten dage voor de reconstructie van een kritische tekst gebruikt worden, laten een verwarrende hoeveelheid tekstvormen zien. De Latijnse vertaling van de hand van Hiëronymus, de Vulgata, is veel meer een eenheid: niet alleen is deze vertaling niet meer tot uitgangspunt voor ingrijpende verdere bewerking geworden, die in meerdere of mindere mate in de verschillende handschriften doorgedrongen is; zij is ook daardoor uniform, dat één vertaler het hele Oude Testament bewerkt heeft (op het bijzondere geval van de vertaling van de Psalmen kan hier niet ingegaan worden).

In de controverse over de vraag naar de hoogste autoriteit voor het geloof heeft de Reformatie de kerk aan de Schrift ondergeschikt verklaard en daarmee aan de Bijbel - Oud en Nieuw Testament - als het autoritatieve Woord van God het hoogste gezag toegekend. Dat zij daarbij niet de Latijnse vertaling maar de Hebreeuwse (en de Griekse) grondtekst tot het uitgangspunt voor de uitleg en voor de vertaling van de Bijbel in de omgangstaal koos, heeft stellig ook met de invloed van het Humanisme te maken dat immers allerwege het 'terug naar de bronnen!' predikte. Toch is dit een punt waarop naar mijn mening een nieuwe bezinning gewenst is.

In de loop van deze eeuw is de situatie op het gebied van de bestudering van de tekstgeschiedenis van het Oude Testament ingrijpend gewijzigd. De wetenschappelijke wereld ontving aan het eind van de vorige eeuw al een voorproefje toen bij toeval de Geniza in Cairo werd ontdekt. Daar kwamen fragmenten van handschriften voor de dag die niet alleen licht wierpen op de ontwikkeling van de vocalisatie van het Hebreeuwse schrift, maar ook lieten vermoeden dat de bijna volkomen eenvormigheid van de overlevering van de Hebreeuwse bijbeltekst in de eeuwen vóór de oudste bewaard gebleven volledige handschriften zo nog niet bestond. In deze fragmenten zijn weliswaar nog geen ingrijpende afwijkingen van de masoretische tekst te vinden, maar de afwijkingen zijn in sommige fragmenten toch talrijker en omvangrijker dan in de latere handschriften^^.

Bepaald schokkend waren echter de vondsten van bijbelhandschriften op verscheidene plaatsen ten Westen van de Dode Zee. In een deel van deze handschriften treffen we een tekst aan, die zo zeer met de latere masoretische tekst overeenstemt, dat hun teksttype gerust als proto-masoretisch aangeduid mag worden. In andere gevallen zijn er echter aanzienlijke verschillen ten opzichte van de masoretische teksttraditie. Wat de situatie zo

gecompliceerd maakt, is het feit dat een tekstgetuige van de Dode Zee nu eens met de masoretische tekst, dan weer met de vermoedelijke Vorlage van de Septuaginta, dan weer met de samaritaanse teksttraditie overeenstemt. Er is geen profetische gave voor nodig om te voorspellen dat nog tientallen jaren gewerkt en gediscussieerd zal worden over de verhouding van de verschillende teksttradities ten opzichte van elkaar. Het is bepaald niet zeker dat de masoretische teksttraditie daarbij uiteindelijk superieur zal blijken te zijn; het is veeleer waarschijnlijk dat het resultaat van bijbelboek tot bijbelboek gedifferentieerd uit zal vallen. Het was immers al lang bekend dat de Hebreeuwse tekst van sommige bijbelboeken-* in een deplorabele staat tot ons gekomen is-''.

De vraag die ik hier aan de orde wil stellen, luidt of we dit gegeven alleen negatief moeten beoordelen of dat we er wellicht een positief theologisch inzicht uit kunnen putten. Is het wellicht zo dat de historische gegevens zoals ze nu op tafel liggen, duidelijk maken dat de bijbelse teksten geen doel in zich zelf zijn, maar alleen een verwijzing naar de zaak, die achter de teksten ligt - ook al hebben wij geen enkele toegang tot deze zaak dan door deze teksten heen*? Heeft in het verleden de omgang met de bijbeltekst, in het bijzonder in de kring van de gereformeerde bijbelwetenschap, niet bij tijd en wijle een bijna 'superstitieus' karakter gekregen, zo, als of niet het Woord vlees, maar het vlees woord zou zijn geworden?

Om ieder misverstand te voorkomen: Hier wordt geen pleidooi gehouden voor een bijbelwetenschap die zich van het voorwerp van haar onderzoek emancipeert. Het gaat er om, welke waarde we precies aan het woord-

karakter van de Schrift toekennen: Is de letter van de Schrift in zichzelf heilig of is zij heilig omdat en voorzover zij naar de zaak verwijst? Is de Schrift daarom woord omdat zij 'woorden van eeuwig leven' bevat die alleen dan 'werken' als zij voetstoots overgenomen en slechts nagespeld worden, of omdat zij ons er telkens op wijst dat het geloof niet uit het gezicht maar uit het gehoor is, dat het niet leeft van wat voor ogen is en gezien kan worden, maar van dat wat ons aan-

gezegd wordt en wat ons onvoorwaardelijke vertrouwen eist? Is bijbelwetenschap puur receptief of wordt ook de eigen inzet van de bijbelwetenschapper verlangd, die Schrift met Schrift vergelijkt - en dat wil ook zeggen: die Schrift aan Schrift meet, die Schriftwoorden tegenover elkaar stelt, ze tegen elkaar afweegt en tot een (onder)scheiding, een waardering komt? "

**Plaats en betekenis van de Septuaginta in de geschiedenis van de bijbeltekst**

Het zojuist gezegde dient ertoe de waarde van de Hebreeuwse tekst ten opzichte van de vertalingen te relativeren en het accent van de uiterlijke vorm van het Schriftwoord naar de inhoud te verleggen. Welke rol speelt deze overweging echter voor de waardering van de Griekse vertaling? Hier is het wellicht zinvol de geschiedenis van de Griekse vertaling met die van de Aramese Targums te vergelijken.

Voor de Pentateuch kennen we verschillende Targums: de Targum Onkelos, de Targum Neofiti I, de Targum Yerushalmi I (ook wel Targum Jonathan ben Uzziel of Targum Pseudo-Jonathan genoemd), de (onvolledige) Targum Yerushalmi II (ook wel Fragmententargum genoemd) benevens verschillende fragmenten'ˆ. Ook al is de - overwegend vertalende en maar weinig verklarende - Targum Onkelos van deze het meest gezaghebbend, de verschillende versies mochten klaarblijkelijk (net zoals de uitspraken in het kader van rabbijnse discussies die in de traditieiiteratuur gedocumenteerd zijn) naast elkaar staan en sloten elkaar niet uit.

Doch ook de Tragumtraditie als geheel sloot het gebruik van de Hebreeuwse bijbeltekst niet uit, maar in. De Targum is weliswaar een vertaling, maar een vertaling in een met het Hebreeuws verwante taal. Wanneer daarom in de synagogale eredienst de Hebreeuwse tekst tweemaal en de Targum eenmaal voorgelezen werd, dan kon het niet anders of de toehoorders moesten, ondersteund door de Aramese vertaling-verklaring, althans brokstukken van de Hebreeuwse tekst (blijven) begrijpen.

De Septuaginta - de enige andere op Joods initiatief vervaardigde bijbelvertaling van de Oudheid - was een vertaling van het Hebreeuws in een geheel andersoortige taal. Het is weliswaar niet uitgesloten dat in de eredienst de Hebreeuwse en de Griekse tekst parallel voorgelezen werden, maar zelfs in dat geval heeft het horen van de Griekse vertaling er in de praktijk waarschijnlijk nauwelijks toe bijgedragen dat de toehoorders althans een deel van de Hebreeuwse tekst konden begrijpen. Om deze reden moest de Griekse ver-

taling tegenover de Hebreeuwse tekst een veel zelfstandiger positie innemen dan de Aramese vertaling. Daarbij hebben de vondsten van de Dode Zee echter ook laten zien dat de Griekse vertaling ons terugbrengt naar een tijd waarin het Oude Testament nog in zijn laatste groeifase verkeerde. In verschillende bijbelboeken weerspiegelt de kortere tekst van de Griekse vertaling een stadium van de tekstoverlevering waarin de tekst nog aangevuld werd". Soms zien we ook dat de uitbreiding van de Bijbeltekst in de Griekse vertaling in een

andere richting ging dan in de Hebreeuwse tekst^" zodat beide samen, in de tekst die zij gemeenschappelijk hebben, het voorlaatste stadium van de tekstoverlevering weerspiegelen en daarnaast elk hun 'Sondergut' bieden.

Daar komt nog bij dat deze Griekse vertaling zowel van Joodse als ook van christelijke zijde gerevideerd werd. Van Joodse zijde werden blijkbaar al in een vroeg stadium van de tekstgeschiedenis afwijkingen van de, of beter: van een Hebreeuwse tekst gecorrigeerd''^. Deze correcties tonen duidelijk aan, dat in het Jodendom het bewustzijn leefde, dat de Septuaginta een vertaling was en bleef, die haar legitimatie ontleende aan de (mate van) overeenstemming met haar brontekst. Daarbij ging men er echter naar alle waarschijnlijkheid van uit, dat de Vorlage van de Septuaginta met de in de tijd en de omgeving van de corrector geldende (overwegend als 'proto-masoretisch' te karakteriseren) bijbeltekst identiek was. Ten aanzien van meer dan één bijbelboek is dit evenwel aantoonbaar onjuist^*.

Later werden zelfs geheel zelfstandige Griekse vertalingen in de plaats van de oude Griekse vertaling of althans zeer ingrijpende bewerkingen van de oude Griekse tekst vervaardigd. De Hebreeuwse tekst (in zijn actuele vorm) vertegenwoordigde ook in dit geval een ideaal waartoe zich de gemeenschap verplicht voelde. De voortgezette bewerking van de Griekse vertaling toont hoe dan ook, dat deze tekst een grote waarde bezat: Men kon het zich niet permitteren de tekst te laten zoals hij was, maar hij kon evenmin eenvoudig opgegeven worden.

Ook van christelijke zijde werd de Griekse tekst bewerkt; hier ging het ondermeer om een aanpassing aan de vereisten van de Griekse taal: De vele onduidelijkheden die bij het woordelijke karakter van deze vertaling onvermijdelijk waren, moesten opgeheven worden want de tekst diende verstaan te kunnen worden. Daarbij kwam het voor dat een aanzienlijke ingreep in de tekst gepleegd werd. Er bestaat een groep met elkaar verwante handschriften (een 'tekstfamilie') die in het boek Jozua de hoofdstukken waarin lijsten met plaatsnamen en beschrijvingen van de grenzen van de woongebieden der verschillende stammen voorkomen, eenvoudig weggelaten heeft^^. Het zal duidelijk zijn dat zulk een weglating ook een hermeneutische dimensie heeft: Het historisch-aardse karakter van het bijbelse getuigenis wordt op deze manier vervluchtigd, de Schrift is dan alléén nog maar 'woord'.

Zo laat de tekstgeschiedenis van de Griekse vertaling twee tendenzen zien die elkaar weliswaar niet noodzakelijk uitsluiten, maar toch zelden met elkaar in overeenstemming gebracht werden: aan de ene kant de 'verificatie aan het origineel' (R. Hanhart), aan de andere kant het streven naar leesbaarheid, begrijpelijkheid, verstaanbaarheid.

**De Septuaginta als document van een nog in beweging zijnde bijbeltekst**

De sporen die het lange proces van de overlevering van de Griekse bijbeltekst achtergelaten heeft, kunnen ons opmerkzaam maken op elementen in de bijbel die door de lezers en hoorders als een uitdaging ondervonden werden. Daarin verschilt de Griekse tekst niet wezenlijk van de Hebreeuwse tekst. Ook daar zijn er hoofdstukken of gebeurtenissen - als voorbeeld zij hier alleen de Sinai-pericoop genoemd, die in onze huidige bijbeltekst twee bijbelboeken vult - die in de vroege overlevering zoveel gevoelens opriepen dat ze telkens

opnieuw bewerkt, aangevuld, gecorrigeerd en verdiept werden, waarbij de theologische accenten niet zelden verlegd zijn'ˆ. Dit proces zet zich - meer kwalitatief

dan kwantitatief (maar vergelijk bijv. een boek als Esther!) - in de Griekse vertaling voort, ten dele omdat de Griekse vertaling op een afwijkende Hebreeuwse tekst teruggaat, die aanvullingen bevatte, ten dele ook omdat in de Griekse vertaling de bedoeling van de Hebreeuwse tekst verduidelijkt, gecorrigeerd of ook geactualiseerd werd.

Al met al heeft de Griekse vertaling - en het dient nog eens gezegd: Deze versie is heilige Schrift van de orthodoxe kerken! - steeds een ruime mate van zelfstandigheid ten opzichte van de Hebreeuwse Bijbel bewaard. Daarmee legt zij een stil getuigenis af van het feit dat het niet de zin van de Bijbel is, op een steriele manier 'heilige Schrift' te zijn, maar dat dit boek veeleer een dynamische boodschap is, die be-grepen en toegeëigend wil worden. En dat niet alleen op het vlak van persoonlijke geloofsbeleving maar ook door middel van hard, eerlijk en kritisch, dat wil ook zeggen: crearie/exegetisch werk. Misschien is zij daarmee wel zoiets als een 'doom in het vlees' van de Kerk die verhindert dat zij haar toevlucht zoekt in een steriele Bijbel-wereldˆ'.

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1 R. Kittel (ed.), Biblia Hebraica, Leipzig '1906, verbeterde druk Leipzig - 1909; R. Kittel (ed.), Biblia Hebraica (met andere medewerlcers voor de verschillende bijbelboeken en een andere opbouw van het [nu dubbele] kritische apparaat), Stuttgart, •'1937; K. Elliger, W. Rudolph (edd.), Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (met opnieuw andere medewerkers voor de meeste bijbelboeken en weer een enkelvoudig kritisch apparaat), Stuttgart 1967-1977. Een nieuwe editie, de Biblia Hebraica Quinta, is in voorbereiding.

2 M.H. Goshen-Gottstein (ed.), The Hebrew University Bible. The Book of Isaiah, Jerusalem 1975-1993; C. Rabin, S. Talmon andE. Tov (eds.). The Hebrew University Bible: The Book of Jeremiah, Jeruzalem 1997.

3 De opbouw van het kritische apparaat is als volgt:1. 'ruwe' gegevens uit de oude vertalingen; 2. materiaal uit de vondsten van de Dode Zee; 3. materiaal uit middeleeuwse Hebreeuwse Bijbelhandschriften; 4. materiaal uit de Joodse traditieliteratuur; onderaan de pagina worden de gegevens uit het eerste apparaat (die immers vanuit andere talen naar een mogelijke Hebreeuwse tekst toe geïnterpreteerd moeten worden) in voetnoten besproken. De andere apparaten bieden Hebreeuwse varianten die niet verder behandeld worden: e beoordeling wordt in alle gevallen aan de lezer overgelaten.

4 E. WUrthwein, Der Text des Alten Testaments, Stuttgart' 1988.

5 E. Tov, De tekst van het Oude Testament, in: A.S. van der Woude e.a. (red.). Bijbels Handboek. Deel I, Kampen 1981, 217-262.

6 R. Wonneberger, Leitfaden zur Biblia Hebraica, Göttingen 1984.

7 D. Barthélemy, Origène et Ie texte de rAncien Testament, in; J. Fontaine, C. Kannengiesser (ed.), Epektasis. Mélanges offerts au cardinal Jean Daniélou, Parijs 1972, 247-261 = D. Barthélemy, Etudes d'histoire du texte de l'Ancien Testament (Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 21), Fribourg (CH) en Göttingen 1978, 203-217; R. Hanhart,

Textgeschichtliche Probleme der LXX von ihrer Entstehung bis Origenes, in: M. Hengel, AM. Schwemer (Hrsg.), Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum, WUNT 72, Tubingen 1994, 1-19.

8 Vgl. H.W. de Knijff, Sleutel en slot. Beknopte geschiedenis van de bijbelse hermeneutiek, Kampen 1980, 17v.: "Origenes geldt in de bijbeluidegging als de vader van de allegorese en in een niet-strikte zin genomen is dat waar: geen Schriftuitlegger voor hem heeft deze methode zo systematisch en doorlopend - men zou haast zeggen: zo levensbeschouwelijk - ten grondslag gelegd aan zijn exegese. (...) Ondanks - zo lijkt het, maar in werkelijkheid: in nauwe samenhang met - zijn allegorische methode gaat zijn grote en zorgvuldig-wetenschappelijke aandacht uit naar de tekst, naar de vorm, overlevering, vertaling en werkelijke betekenis daarvan".

9 H. Graf Reventlow (Hrsg.), Theologische Probleme der Septuaginta und der hellenistischen Hermeneutik, Gütersloh 1997 alsmede M. Hengel, A.M. Schwemer (Hrsg.), Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum, WUNT 72, Tubingen 1994.

10 Het boek van M. Hengel, Judentum und Hellenismus. Studiën zu ihrer Begegnung unter besonderer Berücksichtigung Palastinas bis zur Mitte des 2. Jh.s v. Chn. WUNT 10, Tubingen '1988, heeft niet in de laatste plaats beoogd, deze tegenstelling als onhoudbaar in het licht te stellen, vgl. biz. 191-195: 'Das Judentum Palastinas als "hellenistisches Judentum'" (cusrsivering van mij, CGdH).

11 Vgl. A. Ruiten, 'Hellenisierung des semitischen Alten Testaments" und 'Christianisierung des jüdischen heiligen Buches'. Zur Verhaltnisbestimmung von Christentum und Judentum bei Georg Bertram, in; W. Kurz, R-LMchele, G. Schmalenherg (Hrsg.), Krisen und Umbrüche in der Geschichte des Christentums (FS M. Greschat), GieBen 1994, 107-122.

12 l.L. Seeligmann, Problemen en perspectieven in het moderne Septuaginta-onderzoek, Jaarbericht Ex Oriente Lux (JEOL) 7, 1940, 359-390e. 763-766; dez-, Phasen uit de geschiedenis van het Joodsch historisch bewustzijn. Bijbel, Joodsch Hellenisme, talmoedische literatuur, in: Kemmomenten der antieke beschaving en haar moderne beleving. Mededelingen en Verhandelingen van het Vooraziatisch-Egyptisch Genootschap 'Ex Oriente Lux' (MVEOL) 7, Leiden 1947, 49-73; dez-, The Septuagint Version of Isaiah. A Discussion of its Problems, MVEOL 9, Leiden 1948.

13 LL. Seeligmann, JEOL 7, 389; "de gebondenheid aan den oertekst die een vertaling nimmer geheel zal kunnen verloochenen, ontneemt haar altijd eenigermate haar beteekenis als document eener zelfstandige theologie. Bovendien zijn vele van de op bijzonder hoog peil staande verhandelingen over de theologie der LXX niet altijd ontkomen aan het gevaar meer te vinden in de vertaling dan de vertalers bedoelden"; E. Tov, Theologically Motivated Exegesis Embedded in the Septuagint, Proceedings of a Conference at the Annenberg Research Institute May 15-16, 1989, Supplement JQR, Philadelphia 1990, 215-233 = dez. The Greek and Hebrew Bible. Collected Essays on the Septuagint, SVT 72, Leiden 1999, 257-269.

14 Vgl. A. Aejmelaeus, Translation Technique and the Intention of the Translator, VII Congress of the lOSCS, Leuven 1989, ed. C.E. Cox, Septuagint and Cognate Studies 31, Atlanta (GA) 1991, 23-36 = deZ; On the Trail of the Septuagint Translators. Collected Essays, Kampen 1993, 65-76.

15 /. Soisalon-Soininen, Studiën zur Septuaginta-Syntax. Zu seinem 70. Geburtstag am 4. Juni 1987 herausgegeben von Anneli Aejmelaeus und Rajja Sollamo, AASF B 237, Helsinki 1987.

16 De vertalingen van de afzonderlijke bijbelboeken zijn zeer verschillend in karakter en kwaliteit (maar nergens onzorgvuldig!). Dat heeft uiteraard ook met de moeilijkheidsgraad en de aard van de respectieve Hebreeuwse tekst te maken. Buitengewoon vrij is, zoals bekend, de vertaling van de wijsheidsboeken Job (waarvan de Hebreeuwse tekst grote moeilijkheden biedt) en Spreuken. Hier is de vraag op zijn plaats, of dit wellicht ook met het karakter van deze boeken samenhangt: In de wijsheidsliteratuur wordt aan de natuurlijke cognitieve vermogens van de mens een grote ruimte geboden om zich te ontvouwen. Deze boeken zijn daardoor in zeker opzicht zeer 'toegankelijk' en dat zou de door de vertalers genomen vrijheid voor een deel kunnen verklaren.

In het boek Prediker stoot de wijsheid vooral op haar grenzen (vgl. W. Zimmerli, Ort und Grenze der Weisheit im Rahmen der alttestamentlichen Theologie, in: ders., Gottes Offenbarung. Gesammelte Aufsatze, München 1963, 300-315; H. Gese, Die Krisis der Weisheit bei Koheleth, in: ders., Vom Sinai zum Zion. Alttestamentliche Beitrage zur biblischen Theologie, München 1974, 168-179). Is het toeval dat dit wijsheidsboek in de stijl van Aquila, wellicht zelfs door Aquila zelf in het Grieks vertaald werd?

17 Zo is, om slechts één voorbeeld te noemen, de gedachte van een eigen Alexandrijnse canon inmiddels algemeen opgegeven, vgl. M. Harl, G. Dorival, O. Munnich, La Bible grecque des Septante. Du judaïsme hellénistique a la patristique grecque, Paris 1988, - 1994, 112-118.

18 S. Jellicoe, The Septuagint and Modern Study, Oxford 1968 = Winona Lake (IN) 1993 en het in de vorige noot genoemde boek.

19 E. Bickermann, Der Gott der Makkabaer. Untersuchungen über Sinn und Ursprung der makkabaischen Erhebung, Berlijn 1937 (!). Vgl. hierbij ook M. Hengel, Judentum und Hellenismus, WUNT 10, Tubingen - ˆ-1988, XH, Anm. 3 en 464vv. alsook (kritisch) R. Hanhart, Der status confessionis Israels in hellenisdscher Zeit, ZThK 92 (1995), 315-328.

20 De 'Initialzündung' leverde B.H. Strieker, De brief van Aristeas. De hellenistische codificaties der praehelleense godsdiensten. Verhandelingen der koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, afdeling Letterkunde, Nieuwe Reeks, Deel LXII, No. 4, Amsterdam 1956. Op de lijn van Strieker voorts E. Bickermann, The Septuagint as a Translation, Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research XXVIII, Philadelphia 1959, 1-39 = dez.. Studies in Jewish and Cristian History I, Arbeiten zur Geschichte des Antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums (AGAJU) IX, Leiden 1976, 167-200; D. Barthélemy, Pourqoi laTorah a-t-elle été traduite en grec? , in: M. Black, W.A. Smalley (ed.). On Language, Culture and Religion: in Honor of Eugene A. Nida, Approaches to Semiotics 56, Den Haag 1974, 23-41 = D. Barthélemy, Etudes d'histoire du texte de l'Ancien Testament (Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 21), Fribourg (CH) en Göttingen 1978, 322-340. Kritiek op deze positie bij R. Hanhart, Fragen um die Entstehung der LXX, VT 12 (1962), 139-163 en S.P. Broek, The Phenomenon of the Septuagint, OTS XVII (1972), 11-36 (lit.).

21 Zie voor de rijkdom aan theologische gedachten over de Septuaginta - die hier slechts met enkele trefwoorden aangestipt kan worden - exemplarisch zijn studie Die Bedeutung der Septuaginta-Forschung für

die Theologie, in: R. Hanhart, Drei Studiën zum Judentum, Theologische Existenz Heute 140, München 1967, 38-64 (op blz. 44vv. ook enkele opmerkingen over de eschatoiogisering van het Oude Testament in de Septuaginta!); voor een fenomenologische (maar wel - zoals steeds in het werk van Hanhart - voor zover mogelijk historisch geverifieerde!) schets over het wezen van het Jodendom in de hellenistische tijd, waarin de fenomenen van het ophouden van de profetische inspiratie, de apocalyptiek en de (noodzaak van een) vertaling van de TeNaCh in het Grieks in één 'Gesamtschau' samengenomen worden, vgl. R. Hanhart, Zur geistesgeschichtlichen Bestimmung des Judentums. t.a.p. 23-37, verder uitgewerkt in R. Hanhart, Zum Wesen der makedonisch-hellenistischen Zeit Israels, in: J. Schreiner (Hrsg.), Wort, Lied und Gottesspruch (FS J. Ziegler), Würzburg 1972, 49-58; voor de legitimerende en definiërende functie van de Septuaginta als de Bijbel van het hellenistische Jodendom in de politieke, culturele en religieuze sfeer (de drie 'potenties' staat, cultuur en religie van de door Hanhart zeer hoog gewaardeerde bazeler historicus J. Burckhardt!) met de intentie van bewaring, actualisering en interpretatie, vgl. R. Hanhart, Die Bedeutung der Septuaginta für die Definition des 'hellenistischen Judentums', VTS 40 (1988), 67-80 (op blz. 79v. enkele opmerkingen over Philo als Septuaginta-theoloog!). Voor een summiere schets van Hanharts werk op het gebied van het Septuaginta-onderzoek vgl. het 'Geleitwort' van de uitgevers in D. Fraenkel, U. Quast, J.Wm. Wevers (Hrsg.), Studiën zur Septuaginta - Robert Hanhart zu Ehren. Aus AnlaB seines 65. Geburtstages, Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, philologisch-historische Klasse, 3. Folge Nr. 190 = Mitteilungen des Septuaginta-Untemehmens XX. Götdngen 1990, 9-18. De Göttinger oudtestamenticus R.G. Kratz heeft een bundel studies van de hand van prof Hanhart uitgegeven - vermoedelijk verzamelde opstellen - die ik nog niet onder ogen heb gehad (Tubingen 1999).

Schrijver dezes hoopt in de nabije toekomst aan de theologische hoofdlijnen van Hanharts reflectie op het wezen van de Septuaginta en van de 'Epoche' waarin dit werk is ontstaan, een afzonderlijk opstel te wijden.

22 Zie boven, noot 17.

23 C. Dogniez, Bibliography of the Septuagint / Bibliographic de la Septante 1970-1993, SVT 60, Lelden 1995.

24 Vgl. hiervoor algemeen nog steeds J.L Kook, De ovemame van het Oude Testament door de christelijke kerk, Hilversum 1938; over het bijzondere vraagstuk van de Septuaginta als Griekse vertaling van een Hebreeuwse tekst - vanwege de chronologische begrenzing van deze studie tot de tijd vóór Origenes en Hiëronymus - slechts zeer summier 150vv.

25 Een goed voorbeeld van het complexe karakter van de oudlatijnse vertaling levert de zog. Codex Lugdunensis (Gen-Jdc, uitgave: . Robert. Pentateuchi versio latina antiquissima e codice Lugdunensi, Parijs 1881; in de Göttinger editie geciteerd als '-^'cod 100), vgl. bijv. de analyse van Joz 5:4-6 bij M.L. Margolis, Additions to Field from the Lyons Codex of the Old Latin, JAOS 33 (1917), 254-258; D. de Bruyne O.S.B.. Les Hexaples et l'Ancienne Version Latine, RB 30 (1921), 572-574 alsmede C.G. den Hertog, Jos 5, 4-6 in der griechischen Übersetzung, ZAW 110 (1998), 601.

26 Vgl. hiervoor Chr. Markschies, Hiëronymus und die 'Hebraica Veritas'. Ein Beitrag zur Archaologie des protestantischen Schriftverstandnisses? , in: M. Hengel, A.M. Scliwemer (Hrsg.), Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum, WUNT 72, Tubingen 1994.

27 Vel. bijv. Lev. 1:5, 4:7, Deut. 10:4, Jos. 17:11.

28 Bijvoorbeeld in het geval van de boeken Samuel, vgl. reeds J. Wellhausen, Der Text der Bücher Samuelis, Göttingen 1871; S.R. Driver, Notes on the Hebrew Text and the Topography of the Books of Samuel with an Introduction on Hebrew Palaeography and the Ancient Versions and Facsimiles of Inscriptions and Maps, Oxford ^1913; P.A.H. de Boer, Research into the Text of I Samuel I-XVI. A Contribution to the Study of the Books of Samuel, Amsterdam 1938.

29 Weliswaar heeft A.S. van der Woude in zijn afscheidscollege waarschijnlijk gemaakt, dat de masoretische tekst uiteindelijk het resultaat is van een conservatief overieveringsproces, zodat het getuigenis van de grote masoretische handschriften in ieder geval serieus genomen verdient te worden. Deze inschatting is met het zojuist gezegde slechts schijnbaar in tegenspraak, omdat wij er rekening mee moeten houden, dat de situatie per bijbelboek en zelfs per deel van een bijbelboek kan verschillen, vgl. A.S. van der Woude, Pluriformiteit en uniformiteit. Overwegingen betreffende de tekstoverlevering van het Oude Testament, Kampen 1992.

30 De Schrift biedt ons de vestigia, de sporen van Gods gang door de geschiedenis, vgl. K.H. Miskotte, Zur biblischen Hermeneutik, Theologische Studiën 55, Zollikon 1959, m.n. 6vv. Vgl. ook O. Noordmans, Lichten donker in de exegese, in: VW 2, Kampen 1979, 7-15.

31 Als de heiligheid van de Schrift werkelijk een intrinsieke eigenschap van de (Hebreeuwse) woorden van de Schrift zou zijn, dan zou de consequentie eigenlijk moeten luiden dat ieder gelovige christen Hebreeuws diende te leren. Maar juist het feit dat de Schrift door de eeuwen heen in honderden talen vertolkt is, maakt duidelijk dat het niet om de woorden zelf gaat, ook niet om de Hebreeuwse woorden, maar om hun inhoud.

32 Vgl. K. Beyer, Die aramaischen Texte vom Toten Meer, Göttingen 1984, 273vv.; B. Grossfeld, art. Bible. Translations. Ancient Versions. Aramaic: the Targumim, in: Encyclopedia Judaica 4, 841-851.

33 Het betreft boeken ais Josua, Samuel, Jeremia, Ezechiël en Spreuken, vgl. de in E. Tov, The Greek and Hebrew Bible. Collected Essays on the Septuagint, SVT 72, Leiden 1999, onder het opschrift 'The Septuagint and the Literary Criticism of the Hebrew Bible' bijeengestelde opstellen.

34 Zo vinden wij bijvoorbeeld in de Griekse tekst van het boek Jozua op twee plaatsen, Joz. 21:42d en 24:31a, notities over de stenen messen waarmee Josua de Israëlieten besneden had (Joz. 5:2v.), notities die in de Hebreeuwse tekst, die zich voor het lot van deze messen klaarblijkelijk niet interesseerde, ontbreken.

35 Hier dient met name op de in de woestijn van Juda gevonden fragmenten van een rol met de tekst van de Griekse vertaling van de Kleine Profeten gewezen te worden, vgl. D. Barthélemy, Les Devanciers d'Aquila, SVT 10, Leiden 1963; E. Tov (ed.), The Greek Minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever (SHevXIIgr) (The Seiyal Collection I), DJD VIII, Oxford 1990; R. Hanhart, Textgeschichtliche Probleme der LXX von ihrer Entstehung bis Origenes, in: M. Hengel, A.M. Schwemer (Hrsg.), Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum, WUNT 72, Tubingen 1994, 5vv. Binnen de tekstgeschiedenis van de Septuaginta is het in verschillende bijbelboeken vaak de zog. Codex Alexandrinus (A), die dergelijke vóórhexaplarische correcties overlevert.

36 Een ander mogelijk verklaringsmodel zou zijn, dat de corrector van de Griekse tekst zich bewust was van het feit, dat hij een andere Hebreeuwse tekst voor ogen had dan de oorspronkelijke vertaler en de bestaande Griekse tekst met deze nieuwe maatstaf in overeenstemming probeerde te brengen. Dit zou betekenen, dat de Griekse tekst ten opzichte van de Hebreeuwse tekst een veel geringere waarde bezat. Daartegen spreken evenwel de verschillende getuigenissen - niet alleen de zog. Aristeas-brief - van de grote waardering, die de Septuaginta binnen het toenmalige Jodendom genoot.

37 Dit verschijnsel kan niet los van de geschiedenis van de overlevering van de Griekse vertaling gezien worden, vgl. H. Dörrie, Zur Geschichte der Septuaginta im Jahrhundert Konstantins, ZNW 39 (1940), 57-110.

38 Wanneer in de uitleg van een bijbeltekst van het instrument van de literaire kritiek gebruik gemaakt wordt, zullen - als het goed is - daama niet alleen de oudste in de tekst aangetroffen bestanddelen behandeld worden, maar de hele tekst in zijn gereconstrueerde gelaagdheid. De verhouding van Griekse en Hebreeuwse tekst kan analoog gezien worden; ook de als secundair onderkende elementen in een tekst behoeven uitleg!

39 De Septuaginta wijst ons er - samen met de in de woestijn van Juda gevonden Hebreeuwse tekstgetuigen - op, dat wij niet over het Schriftwoord beschikken, maar dat wij dit temidden van de verschillende geschreven woorden dienen te zoeken. Dat schept ruimte, maar ook onzekerheid. Wij stuiten hier op een vooral pastorale vraag. Deze kan hier alleen gesteld worden. Op dit punt is een verdere doordenking dringend gewenst.

## 3. Why should Christians Care about the LXX … Seulgi Byun

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For a short introduction to the Septuagint, see Ryan M. Reeves and Charles Hill, *KNOW How We Got Our Bibles* (Zondervan, 2018).

"Gentlemen, have you a Septuagint? If not, sell all you have, and buy a Septuagint." ~ Ferdinand Hitzig (19th-century German theologian)

## WHY SHOULD CHRISTIANS CARE ABOUT THE SEPTUAGINT?

The Septuagint is quite possibly the most important translation of the Bible. It is the oldest translation of the OT into another language. It was considered by Philo and Josephus to be on an equal footing with the Hebrew Bible. It was preferred to

the Hebrew by the Early Christian Church. And it sheds much-needed light on the development of the New Testament.

Still, many Christians today have little to no knowledge of it.

## What is the Septuagint?

The term Septuagint is often thought of as *the* Greek version (or translation) of the Hebrew Bible, much like the Vulgate is the Latin version or the Peshitta is the Syriac version. But, technically speaking, there is no such thing as "*the* Septuagint." If you own a modern copy of the Septuagint (e.g., Rahlfs or Brenton editions), it is an "eclectic" edition, that is, a collection of the best and most reliable Greek manuscripts reconstructed to approximate the original translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew to Greek.

So, when scholars use this term, it does not refer to a single text. Rather, it refers to a collection of Greek translations produced by numerous scribes over the course of a few hundred years and, in all likelihood, composed in different locations. Today, the term is usually used to refer generally to the various Greek translations of the Hebrew Bible, as well as some additional books, such as Tobit, Maccabees, and Sirach, to name a few.

Though somewhat legendary in character, the *Letter of Aristeas* (second-century BCE) preserves some valuable information on the origins of the Septuagint. It tells us that an Egyptian king, Ptolemy Philadelphus (reigned from 285-246 BCE), commissioned a translation of the Hebrew Bible for his library in Alexandria. Seventy-two translators from Jerusalem were subsequently sent to the Island of Pharos to translate the Torah into Greek.

The term Septuagint, meaning "seventy," actually refers to the seventy-two translators—six from each tribe of Israel—involved in translating the Pentateuch from Hebrew to Greek in the third-century BCE (seventy-two is rounded down to seventy, hence the Roman numeral LXX). The rest of the Hebrew Bible was translated from Hebrew to Greek by various hands over the next century or so.

# Why the need for a Greek translation of the Old Testament?

Hebrew ceased to be a spoken language as early as the exilic or post-exilic period (cf. Neh 13.24), and Aramaic became the *lingua franca* of the Jewish people. With the rise of Alexander the Great and the Greek empires, the Jews in the diaspora were Hellenized, and for some Jews, especially those living in Ptolemaic Egypt, Greek became the primary language. Thus, it became necessary for the Scriptures to be translated into Greek.

It is important, therefore, to remember that the Septuagint is first and foremost a translation. One of the key areas of study for Septuagint scholars today is the method(s) of translation adopted by scribes. For example, did the translator of a given Old Testament book take a more literal approach or an approach closer to dynamic equivalence?

Scholars agree that some books are literal translations and others are paraphrases, much like the Living Bible. Given that Greek manuscripts are the earliest witnesses to the Hebrew Old Testament, a more literal manuscript can be helpful for textual criticism. The non-literal translations, however, may shed light on the theology, philosophy, or religious practices of the Jewish faith in the late Second Temple period.

# The Septuagint helps us better understand the New Testament

A Greek scholar once remarked, “A single hour lovingly devoted to the text of the Septuagint will further our exegetical knowledge of the Pauline Epistles more than a whole day spent over a commentary.” The hyperbole notwithstanding, few would dispute the broader point: the Septuagint is an invaluable resource for Christians interested in the New Testament (NT).

There are some obvious ways in which the Septuagint has influenced the New Testament. For example, the title for Jesus in the NT, "Christ" [*Christos*], is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word *maschiach*, "Anointed One," in the Septuagint. Words we are all familiar with, such as "glory" [*doxa*], "Lord" [*kurios*], and "gospel" [*euangelion*], derive special meaning from the LXX.

One of the most important areas of study relating to the Septuagint is the use of the OT in the NT. The reason for this is that most of the direct citations of the OT in the NT match the Septuagint, not the Hebrew Bible (or Masoretic Text [MT]). There are approximately 300 OT passages that are directly quoted or strongly alluded to in the NT.

In most of these cases, the NT writers did not cite the OT text word-for-word but paraphrased the OT texts using Jewish exegetical techniques. However, in cases where the OT is cited word-for-word, the NT writers quote the Septuagint over the MT approximately 75 percent of the time (according to some scholars, that percentage climbs to over 90 percent, depending on how one defines "citation").

This raises several important questions. Did the NT authors cite the Septuagint to make a particular theological point that could only be made from the Greek translation? Or is the apparent preference of the Septuagint simply a matter of using the translation of the OT that corresponds to the language in which the biblical author was writing? This would be like how modern preachers cite the ESV or NIV translation in a sermon, irrespective of the translational nuances and exegetical differences.

An interesting case in point is the citation of Isa 7.14, the famous words of the prophet Isaiah to Ahaz, in Matt 1.23:

Hebrew: "Behold, the young woman [*'almah*] shall conceive."

Septuagint: "Behold, the virgin [*parthenos*] shall conceive."

Matthew 1.23: "Behold, the virgin [*parthenos*] shall conceive."

Matthew cites the Septuagint (not the Hebrew) word for word, which suggests that the language of the virgin birth of Jesus is derived, in part, from the Septuagint.

Of course, each text must be studied independently and carefully, but the preponderance of Septuagint citations in the NT and key theological terms demand that we take the Septuagint seriously.

## The Septuagint helps us better understand Jewish theology

The Septuagint also sheds light on the theology and worship practices of the Jewish people in the Second Temple period (the period leading up to New Testament times).

For example, in the Septuagint version of the Pentateuch, the Hebrew word for altar [*mizbeah*] is rendered by *thysiasterion* when referring to the Jewish altar but by *bomos* when speaking of pagan altars. This shows that the translators may have had a theology motive—they wanted to distinguish between Jewish and non-Jewish practices.

Scholars disagree on the extent to which *theological* interpretations occur in the Septuagint, especially where the Greek translation diverges significantly from the Hebrew Bible. Some have argued that the translator's primary purpose was to translate the Scriptures and make it accessible and intelligible for his audience, similar, perhaps, to how a modern-day Bible translator might approach his or her task.

Others have maintained that the translator's job was more theological or exegetically motivated, to reinterpret and actualize the Scriptures for his immediate community and with reference to contemporary circumstances and events.

An example that illustrates this debate is the Greek translation of the Servant Song in Isaiah 53:10, which is noticeably different from the MT:

MT: "Yet it was YHWH's will *to crush him*, to cause him to suffer."

LXX: "And the Lord desires *to cleanse him* from his blow."

Why did the Septuagint translator render the Hebrew word "crush" by the Greek word "cleanse"? One scholar suggests that the translator is lessening the suffering of the Servant in order to avoid associating YHWH with a "demonic" action.

Another theory is the translator did not know the meaning of this relatively rare word, and that "cleanse" is simply a mistranslation or an educated guess. A third possibility is that the translator was looking at a Hebrew text that presented a different word here.

Perhaps you can see why Septuagint scholars love digging into this translation!

The Connection Between the Septuagint and the Hebrew Old Testament

One issue for scholars is the fact that there are differences between the Septuagint and the Hebrew Bible in every book of the Old Testament. Most of these differences are negligible, but some are quite significant, involving entire paragraphs, if not chapters, of a particular biblical book.

For instance, large differences are discernible in the genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11; there are significant pluses and minuses (phrases or verses that are added or omitted) in most of the books of the Old Testament, but especially in Numbers, Joshua, Samuel, and Kings. Major chronological and editorial structures are transposed in Samuel and Kings. The Septuagint Psalter adds an extra Psalm (Psalm 151), and the Septuagint copy of the book of Jeremiah is significantly shorter (1/8th) than the Hebrew. And lastly, the books of Daniel and Esther have significant sections added to the Greek versions.

Determining the earliest or "original" text is a complex process fraught with challenges. Nevertheless, scholars engaged in textual criticism record and analyze the differences between Greek and Hebrew manuscripts (among others). They reckon these differences with the various stages of the Old Testament books in order to determine the reliability of and relationship between manuscripts.

These studies have been incorporated into the critical editions of the Hebrew Bible (e.g., BHS, BHQ, HUBP) and Greek Bible (Cambridge or Göttingen Septuagint) and have sometimes influenced our modern translations.

When modern translators work on an English translation these texts are used to determine the best translations of the Old Testament books. There is much work yet to be done.

The importance of the Septuagint cannot be emphasized enough. It sheds much-needed light on important words and theological concepts in both the Old and New Testaments. It helps us understand better the religious and political context in which Jesus and the New Testament authors lived; it has helped scholars determine which manuscripts are most reliable, which in turn leads to reliable translations of the Old Testament; and it gives us greater insight into the church fathers, who often quoted the Septuagint over the Hebrew Bible. So, although I would not recommend selling everything you have, I say with Hitzig, "Go buy a Septuagint!"

Further Study

Karen Jobes and Moisés Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015). It is accessible for the first-time student but is equally an excellent reference for pastors and scholars. Alternatively, a much shorter companion is Jenny Dine's *The Septuagint: Understanding the Bible and Its World*.

The most recent translation of the Septuagint is *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, edited by Albert Pietersma and Benjamin Wright.

## 4. The Canon of the New Testament …. Roger Nicole

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"Why," the Sunday-school student asked, "did God not provide for us a Bible with an inspired table of contents, so we would not remain in a quandary as to the precise scope of Scripture?"

"There are three main answers to your question," replied the teacher. Here is how the teacher summarized them.

First, when you raise a question beginning with "Why" or "How" you must learn the important lesson that it is not possible in every case to receive an answer so complete that it settles all difficulties. This is so because the reasons for God's action or the methods that he used are often inscrutable from our finite, earthly, sin-blemished viewpoint. Even human parents are not obligated to give a full explanation when their children ask "Why." How much more is this the case when the infinite, holy and sovereign God confronts our "Why"!

Secondly, the books of the Bible were not produced in a bound volume as we have them now. They were written originally on separate scrolls over a span of some 1500 years. Unless God should provide prophetically a list that included many books not yet in existence, it would appear that the list could not be given before the end of the first century AD - and by that time it was obvious that God's people did not have an absolute need for such a list. In fact our Lord and the apostles probably did not have one and yet functioned with a clear knowledge of the canon of the OT.

Thirdly, we are not really in a quandary concerning the scope of Scripture, for God has provided his people with grounds for assurance in this area. The study of the canonics of Scripture is oriented in this direction. It may be pursued along two paths.

In the first place, the history of the canon explores the course of acceptance and rejection among God's people historically. It takes note of the hesitations, the consensus and the occasional errors of Jews and Christians. This is an arresting study in which we are often confronted with evidences of the providential guidance of God. This study manifests that a notable consensus on the OT existed among the Jews in or before the first century of our era and that a similar consensus on the NT prevailed among Christians no later than AD 400. The present article does not deal with this aspect of canonics.

In the second place, the dogmatic study of canonics explores on what ground we may attain a conviction that the 39 books of the OT and the 27

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books of the NT constitute the full collection of the inspired authoritative books that God intended for his people and that this collection is pure (the canon does not include any intruding book that should not be included) and complete (no book that should be there has been omitted). We must therefore study the criteria of canonicity and evaluate their adequacy singly or in combination to give us assurance.

Since the authority of the Hebrew canon was clearly established by the practice of Jesus and the apostles, we will consider here only the canonicity of the NT and review seven criteria that have been at times invoked in the evangelical Church.

## I. Apostolicity

This criterion points to the obvious fact that the apostles were appointed by Jesus to carry on and perpetuate his teaching ministry under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Matt 28:19-20; John 14:26; 15:26-27; 16:13; 17:25-26). They functioned with this conviction as a premise (Acts 15:28; 1 Cor 2:4-5, 12-13; Gal 1:8, 15; Eph 2:20; 1 Thess 2:13; 2 Pet 3:16; Rev 22:18-19; etc.). Applied to the subject of canonicity, the principle could be stated as follows: For a NT book to be canonical it is necessary and sufficient that it should have been written by an apostle. Canonicity would be implied in apostolic authorship. In evaluation we may make the following observations.

1. *Positively*. A number of NT books were indeed written by apostles: Matthew, John (gospel, epistles, Revelation), 13 epistles of Paul, 2 epistles of Peter: 21 out of 27 books, if the traditional view of their authorship be accepted. The possibility exists that James, Jude and Hebrews could be added depending on their authorship, which could be apostolic.

If under apostolic authorship we include books written not by apostles themselves but by people who wrote under their guidance and supervision, all the NT books could be included, for the gospel of Mark was deemed to have been written under the influence of Peter; the gospel of Luke, Acts and Hebrews under the tutelage of Paul; and James and Jude under less clearly defined guidance, if not by the apostles of that name.

This criterion points to the well-accepted factor that canonical NT books were produced during the first century AD and that later works are not to be viewed as candidates.

This is a criterion of fundamental, though not exclusive, significance in the evaluation and discussions in the early Church and of many modern evangelical scholars, such as A. Alexander, C. Hodge and B. B. Warfield.

This criterion is not always construed as the exclusive test, but it may be and was in fact combined with other criteria in the history of the Church.

2. *Negatively*. The canonicity of a book would stand or fall with an acceptance of the authenticity of authorship, according to evangelical persuasion. Now it is a plain matter of record that this authenticity has been challenged and rejected by many Biblical critics. It would seem unfortunate to favor a position where we would have to prove a book's apostolic author-

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ship on independent evidence before we could feel confident of its legitimate place in the canon. Evangelicals, even though their confidence may not be shaken by the critical arguments, nevertheless often proceed here with the reverse reasoning: "Since this book is in the canon it must be authentic."

The concept of expanded apostolicity is needed in order to justify the canonical standing of Mark, Luke and Acts, all of which were received without demurral at a very early date. This, however, appears as an artificial device to include under the same rule some writings whose acceptance had already been secured on other grounds.

The principle of expanded apostolicity was not applied uniformly by the Church since otherwise Clement's (Phil 4:3), Barnabas' and Polycarp's epistles should have been included (as some of them were temporarily) and should have retained their place in the canon to this day (as none of them did). The case of Polycarp is especially embarrassing since the author expressly denies having apostolic authority.[1]

The early Church did at times show some inadequacy in handling this criterion, since some important segments of the Church raised questions on that score against Hebrews and Revelation, which appeared as suspect on other grounds.

If a genuine apostolic writing were rediscovered in our day, this principle would demand the writing's immediate acceptance in the canon. Yet God evidently did not intend all inspired utterances to be included in the canon (John 21:25; 2 Cor 2:3-4[?]; Col 4:16), and it would seem strange that he would permit the Church to function for some 1900 years without a book that would have been inspired and written in the first century.

It places the decision in the hands of scholars whose spiritual discernment has not always matched their erudition.

On balance, the criterion of apostolicity is important but insufficient by itself alone to determine canonicity.

## II. Orthodoxy

It goes almost without saying that any canonical book must be orthodox. God would not permit his Word to teach falsehood as well as truth.

1. *Positively*. All canonical books are indeed orthodox. The early Church did often mention this as a criterion and was helped in discarding unworthy materials by the application of this principle.

2. *Negatively*. This is a purely negative criterion. Nothing that violates it can be viewed as canonical: Orthodoxy is necessary, but it is far from sufficient. Thousands of books have been written that are orthodox but not canonical.

The early Church demonstrates that it was not easy to handle this criterion, for the west had some difficulty in acknowledging Hebrews, and the

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east long entertained reservations about Revelation. Luther furthermore rejected the full authority of James because he interpreted its teaching as clashing with Galatians and Romans.

This criterion tends to circular reasoning. Orthodoxy must be defined by the canon, and here it seems that the canon is defined by orthodoxy.

## III. Christocentricity

This criterion, advocated by Martin Luther, was grounded in the correct observation that the whole Bible as a redemptive book has Jesus Christ as its center. As Pascal later wrote: "Jesus Christ whom both Testaments regard, the Old as its hope, the New as its model, and both as their center."[2]

1. *Positively*. It is indeed true that Jesus Christ is central to the whole Bible, although Luther was carried away at times into fanciful hermeneutics in his attempt to exhibit this principle.

2. *Negatively*. This is a purely negative principle to be used in connection with other criteria, such as apostolicity.

Many of Luther's own writings are Christocentric (e.g. *The Freedom of a Christian*), but they were never viewed as potential canonical books even by Luther's most emphatic followers.

Luther himself committed a very serious blunder by advocating the exclusion from the canon of Esther, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs and the epistle of James. Fortunately the Lutheran Church has not followed suit. It is interesting to note that Luther sooner eliminated a book from the canon than to admit an imperfection or error in a canonical book.

## IV. Inspiration

Since all the canonical books are inspired by God, some authors, including notably Laird Harris, have suggested that inspiration is really the criterion to be applied.[3]

1. *Positively*. There is indeed a correspondence between inspiration and canonicity. The statement of 2 Tim 3:16 is true for both testaments: "All Scripture is God-breathed." No noninspired book has a place in the canon.

2. *Negatively*. This appears to be a vicious circle. We were asking: "How do we recognize an inspired book so as to include it in the canon?" It is tautological to say, "We recognize it because it is inspired." In other words this criterion does not advance us by even one inch in our search.

It is not certain that even all the original human authors were conscious of being inspired. We know a book to be inspired because it is canonical. We

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do not know how to recognize infallibly inspired books so as to assign them a place in the canon.

If this principle were as simple as it is thought to be by its advocates it is difficult to understand why it took the Church some 300 years to make up its mind on the exact list of NT books and why the problem of the OT Apocrypha still plagues some of us to this day.

## V. The Testimony Of The Holy Spirit To The Individual Christian

This criterion emphasizes that the supreme authority of Scripture is grounded in God's own accreditation and not in a human decision. The *Westminster Larger Catechism* stated:

The Scriptures manifest themselves to be the word of God by their majesty and purity [here follows a number of characteristics]: but the Spirit of God bearing witness by and with the Scriptures in the heart of man, is alone able fully to persuade it that they are the very word of God.[4]

1. *Positively*. The great positive significance of this remark is to be found in the fact that here the authority of Scripture is not grounded in a human decision, be it ever so impressive, but in the witness of God himself, the Holy Spirit, working in the minds and hearts of Christian people. One can hardly exaggerate the importance of this consideration, and we hope to validate it fully under the seventh criterion.

2. *Negatively*. This is not in fact the way in which the canon was formed. As individuals we do not receive a large bag of separate Bible passages out of which we should draw, as one draws a lottery number, in order to see which ones are confirmed by the Holy Spirit. Rather we are presented with a bound book, and it is as we read in the book that the Holy Spirit awakens in us the perception that this is God's Word.

The *Westminster Confession of Faith* is misinterpreted if it is construed to assert that the canon is the result of an individual perception since in the second paragraph of the same first chapter a list of the canonical books is presented as binding on all believers.

In the way in which our Lord and the apostles referred to the OT it is clear that the appeal was to an accredited collection of books, not to individual passages privately perceived as divinely inspired. The existence of a publicly acknowledged canon of the OT bears witness by analogy to a similarly formed canon of the NT (see the seventh criterion).

## VI. The Authority Of The Church

It is the contention of the Roman Catholic Church that it is the prerogative of the Church to establish the canon and that those who reject the Church's authority have by that act logically cut themselves off from the

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principle that alone undergirds the appropriateness of the NT canon. "Scripture was produced by and attested in the Church," they say, "not the Church by Scripture."

1. *Positively*. There is here a remarkably simple answer to the question, "What is the NT canon?" This answer is the following: "Check with the Church that has the authority to establish it." This is something that the most simple can understand and do.

It is true that God gave his word to his people and that the question of the canon is to be settled in the community of faith.

The Roman Catholic Church certainly does have an appropriate NT canon.

2. *Negatively*. There are several fallacies in the Roman Catholic argument: (1) The OT existed before the NT Church. (2) The Church is under the authority of the Word and has no authority over the Word. (3) The Church's authority is at most designative, not constitutive. It may be compared to the power of the bailiff who announces: "Here comes the judge." (4) The rights of the eastern churches appear to have been overlooked in this argument.

The Roman Church has made an egregious mistake in this area by invading the realm of the OT canon and legislating the canonicity of the OT Apocrypha in spite of Jerome's clear warnings.

Over several centuries the historical attitude of the Roman Catholic Church toward the Bible and its use by laypeople may be characterized as hostile: For long decades they burned more Bibles than they published. We are glad to see some amelioration in the twentieth century.

## VII. The Witness Of The Holy Spirit Given Corporately To God's People And Made Manifest By A Nearly Unanimous Acceptance Of The NT Canon In Christian Churches

It is important to distinguish carefully between the sixth and seventh criteria. Here the purely designative function of the churches is specified, and it is viewed not as an act of authority but as the result of a special guidance of the Holy Spirit in this area.

1. *Positively*. This formulation takes account of the stunning near-unanimity of Christian churches on the scope of the NT canon: Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Lutheran, Episcopalian, Reformed, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal, Quaker, Disciples, Adventist, and even Universalist-Unitarian, Mormon, Christian Science and Jehovah's Witness churches all acknowledge precisely the same 27 books of the NT, even though some of these would ease greatly their own task by eliminating some of the books, as the Ebionites and gnostics of old had done.

Acceptance of this canon is not sufficient for a badge of orthodoxy, as our list makes abundantly plain, but on the question of the canon they do agree. We offer the explanation that this near-unanimity is due to the Holy Spirit's action and is not merely a fortuitous coincidence.

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This approach provides a ready answer to the question of the canon: "Ask any Christian community."

There is a notable parallel here with the establishment of the OT canon. God entrusted his OT oracles to the Jews (Rom 3:2), and they were providentially guided in the recognition and preservation of the OT. Jesus and the apostles confirmed the rightness of their approach while castigating their attachment to a tradition that was superimposed on the Word of God (Matt 15:1-20; Mark 7:1-23). God entrusted his NT oracles to his people in the churches, and they are nearly unanimous in the recognition of the NT canon.

This approach approximates the order of events in life. People who are to be instructed in the Christian faith generally receive a bound copy of the Bible and seldom raise questions concerning the canon of either the OT or the NT. These questions arise much later, often after years of Christian life. This is particularly true of those who are born of Christian parents. The question of criteria of canonicity does not even arise in their infant minds.

This approach provides us with a relatively simple answer as to whether the canon remains open or is closed. The likelihood of an almost unanimous acceptance of additional books is indeed minimal.

The strength of this criterion increases as years pass by. In a sense we are privileged as compared with the people of the Church until AD 400, since they were exposed to some indecision with respect to the *antilegomena* (Hebrews, Revelation, James, 2 Peter, 2 John, 3 John and Jude). They were closer to the original oral message of Jesus and the apostles and on that account were perhaps in a lesser need of a fixed canon. Meanwhile, since the year AD 200 there has been consensus on the 20 other books, known as *homologoumena* ("agreed upon").

This criterion accommodates many of the factors that are good in the criteria previously discussed: (1) All NT writings are apostolic in the broad sense of the term. (2) They surely are orthodox. (3) They are centered in Christ and his work. (4) They are indeed inspired. (5) The Holy Spirit does bear witness to them, although not merely to individuals seeking to determine the canon. (6) They are officially endorsed by the churches. Many confessions give them specific endorsement, including the canons of the council of Trent, Philaret's *Longer Catechism of the Russian Church*, the *Gallic Confession*, the *Belgic Confession*, the *39 Articles*, the *Irish Articles of Religion*, the *Westminster Confession*, the *Savoy Declaration*, the *Second London Baptist Confession* and the *Confession of the Waldenses.*

This criterion is very ably presented in classic treatments.[5]

2. *Negatively*. Answers to objections: (1) Will this way of handling the canon put us back under the tutelage and authority of the Church of Rome? Absolutely not. The Church of Rome appears here not as our authority for the canon but as one of the churches whose position reflects the influence of the Holy Spirit. He is the authority, not the Church. Following the type of reasoning of the objector, one would have to say that our view of the canon

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of the OT puts us under the authority of the synagogue. This is manifestly absurd. My speedometer registers the speed of my car, but it does not cause it. The cause of the speed is to be found in the motor. The consensus of churches on the NT is an index and evidence of the Holy Spirit's guidance. The Holy Spirit is the moving authoritative force.

(2) What if the Muslims argue as you do and say that the great consensus of Islam in their view of the Qur'an reflects God's authority for their canon? Perhaps they say that, but the cases are not parallel. If I mistake not, the Qur'an was produced entirely in the seventh century and is the work of one man. There never was a process as in the NT canon, with some centuries of debate and a stunning final consensus. The case of the Qur'an is more nearly analogous to the works of Homer or Shakespeare than to the NT.

(3) What if the early Church did not have access to this criterion? It is true that it did not, but it was closer to the living voice of Jesus and the apostles and thus could and did struggle better through a determination that we might not now be capable to make.

We receive as canonical Scriptures of the OT all the books that have been transmitted to us, under that title, by the universal consent of the Jewish people, to whom the oracles of God were entrusted under the Lord's guidance. And we receive equally as canonical Scriptures of the NT all the books that, under the guidance of the same Providence, have been transmitted to us as such by the universal consent of the churches of the Christian world.[6]

So maybe the Bible's table of contents is more "inspired" than was thought at first.

**References**

[1] Pol. *Phil.* 3.

[2] R. Pascal, *Pensées* 740. Cf. *Great Books of the Western World* (Chicago, 1952) 33.319.

[3] R. L. Harris, *Inspiration and Canonicity of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1957).

[4] *Westminster Larger Catechism*, Question 4.

[5] L. Gaussen, *The Canon of the Holy Scriptures* (London: James Nisbet, 1862); A. Lecerf, *An Introduction to Reformed Dogmatics* (London: Lutterworth, 1959), esp. 319-354.

[6] *Confession of the Evangelical Free Church of Geneva.* Cf. *Creeds of Christendom* (4th ed.; ed. P. Schaff; New York: Harper, 1919) 3.781.

## 5. New Testament Use of the Old Testament …. by Roger Nicole

THE NEW Testament contains an extraordinarily large number of Old Testament quotations. It is difficult to give an accurate figure since the variation in use ranges all the way from a distant allusion to a definite quotation introduced by an explicit formula stating the citation's source. As a result, the figures given by various authors often reflect a startling discrepancy.

### 1. RANGE OF OLD TESTAMENT REFERENCES

The present writer has counted 224 direct citations introduced by a definite formula indicating the writer purposed to quote. To these must be added seven cases where a second quotation is introduced by the conjunction "and," and 19 cases where a paraphrase or summary rather than a direct quotation follows the introductory formula. We may further note at least 45 instances where the similarity with certain Old Testament passages is so pronounced that, although no explicit indication is given that the New Testament author was referring to Old Testament Scripture, his intention to do so can scarcely be doubted. Thus a very conservative count discloses unquestionably at least 295 separate references to the Old Testament. These occupy some 352 verses of the New Testament, or more than 4.4 per cent. Therefore one verse in 22.5 of the New Testament is a quotation.

If clear allusions are taken into consideration, the figures are much higher: C. H. Toy lists 613 such instances, Wilhelm Dittmar goes as high as 1640, while Eugen Huehn indicates 4105 passages reminiscent of Old Testament Scripture. It can therefore be asserted, without exaggeration, that more than 10 per cent of the New Testament text is made up of citations or direct allusions to the Old Testament. The recorded words of Jesus disclose a similar percentage. Certain books like Revelation, Hebrews, Romans are well nigh saturated with Old Testament forms of language, allusions and quotations. Perusal of Nestle's edition of the Greek New Testament, in which the Old Testament material is printed in bold face type, will reveal at a glance the extent of this practice. These facts appear even more impressive when one remembers that in New Testament times the Old Testament was not as today duplicated by the million but could be obtained only in expensive handwritten copies.

If we limit ourselves to the specific quotations and direct allusions which form the basis of our previous reckoning, we shall note that 278 different Old Testament verses are cited in the New Testament: 94 from the Pentateuch, 99 from the Prophets, and 85 from the Writings. Out of the 22 books in the Hebrew reckoning of the Canon only six (Judges-Ruth, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Ezra-Nehemlah, Chronicles) are not explicitly referred to. The more extensive lists of Dittmar and Huehn show passages reminiscent of all Old Testament books without exception.

It is to be noted that the whole New Testament contains not even one explicit citation of any of the Old Testament Apocrypha which are considered as canonical by the Roman Catholic Church. This omission can scarcely be viewed as accidental.

## 2. AUTHORITY OF OLD TESTAMENT REFERENCES

From beginning to end, the New Testament authors ascribe unqualified authority to Old Testament Scripture. Whenever advanced, a quotation is viewed as normative. Nowhere do we find a tendency to question, argue, or repudiate the truth of any Scripture utterance. Passages sometimes alleged to prove that the Lord and his apostles challenged at times the authority of the Old Testament, when carefully examined, turn out to bolster rather than to impair the evidence for their acceptance of Scripture as the Word of God. In Matthew 5:21-43 and 19:3-9, our Lord, far from setting aside the commandments of the Old Testament, really engages in a searching analysis of the spiritual meaning and original intent of the divine precept, and from this vantage point he applies it in a deeper and broader way than had been done before him. In some passages in which comparison is made between the revelation of the Old Testament and that of the New (John 1:17; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Galatians 3:19ff.; Hebrews 1:1, 2, and so forth), the superior glory of the New Testament is emphasized, not as in conflict with the Old, but as the perfect fulfillment of a revelation still incomplete, yet sanctioned by divine authority.

It is noteworthy that the New Testament writers and the Lord Jesus himself did not hesitate on occasion to base their whole argumentation upon one single word of Old Testament Scripture (Matthew 2:15; 4:10; 13:35; 22:44; Mark 12:36; Luke 4:8; 20:42, 43; John 8:17; 10:34; 19:37; Acts 23:5; Romans 4:3, 9, 23; 15:9-12; 1 Corinthians 6:16; Galatians 3:8, 10,13; Hebrews 1:7; 2:12; 3:13; 4:7; 12:26), or even on the grammatical form of one word (Galatians 3:16).

Of special interest are the formulas by which the New Testament writers introduce their quotations. In a particularly significant way these formulas reflect their view of the Old Testament Scriptures, since they do not manifest any design to set forth a doctrine of Scripture, but are rather the instinctive expression of their approach to the sacred writings.

The formulas emphasize strongly the divine origin of the Old Testament, and commonly (at least 56 times) refer to God as the author. In a number of passages God is represented as the speaker when the quotation is not a saying of God recorded as such in the Old Testament, but the word of Scripture itself, in fact, at times a word addressed to God by man (Matthew 19:5; Acts 4:25; 13:35; Hebrews 1:5-8, 13; 3:7; 4:4). These “can be treated as a declaration of God’s only on the hypothesis that all Scripture is a declaration of God’s” (B. B. Warfield, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, p. 143).

Often passages of the Old Testament are simply attributed to the Scripture, which is thus personified as speaking (John 7:38, 42; 15:25; 19:37; Romans 4:3; 7:7; 9:17; 10:11; 11:2; 1 Corinthians 14:24; 2 Corinthians 6:2; Galatians 3:8; 4:30; 1 Timothy 5:18; James 2:23;

4:5). In Romans 9:17 and Galatians 3:8 the identification between the text of Scripture and God as speaking is carried so far that the actions of God are actually ascribed to Scripture, which is represented as speaking to Pharaoh and as foreseeing justification by faith. Warfield urges that "These acts could be attributed to Scripture only as the result of such a habitual identification, in the mind of the writer, of the text of Scripture with God as speaking that it became natural to use the term 'Scripture says,' when what was really intended was 'God, as recorded in Scripture, said' " (*ibid.*, pp. 299 f.).

The collaboration of man in the writing of Scripture is also emphasized. The names of Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Joel and Hosea appear in the formulas of quotation. It is noteworthy that, in the majority of the cases where the human author is named, reference is made not to a personal statement recorded in Scripture but to an utterance of God, which the writer was commissioned to transmit as such. In a number of passages both the divine and the human authorship appear side by side.

> "... which was spoken by the Lord through, the prophet... " (Matthew 1:22). "David himself said in the Holy Spirit." (Mark 12:36; cf. Matthew 22:43). "... the Holy Spirit spake before by the mouth of David" (Acts 1:16; cf. 4:25). "Well spake the Holy Spirit through Isaiah the prophet... " (Acts 28:25). "He saith also in Hosea... " (Romans 9:25).

These passages supply clear evidence that the divine superintendence was not viewed as obliterating the human agency and characteristics of the writers, but rather, that God secured a perfectly adequate presentation of the truth through the responsible and personal agency of the men he called and prepared for this sacred task.

"It is written" is one of the frequent formulas of introduction, the one, in fact, which our Lord used three times in his temptation (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10). This expression does not connote merely that an appeal is made to the written text of Scripture but, as Warfield so aptly has said, "The simple adduction in this solemn and decisive manner of a written authority carries with it the implication that the appeal is made to the indefectible authority of the Scriptures of God, which in all their parts and in every one of their declarations are clothed with the authority of God Himself" (*ibid.*, p. 240).

The use of the terms "law" (John 10:34; 15:25; Romans 3:19; 1 Corinthians 14:21), or "prophets" (Matthew 13:35), where reference is made to passages belonging, strictly speaking, to other parts of the Hebrew Canon, indicates that the New Testament writers viewed the whole Old Testament Scripture as having legal authority and prophetic character.

In their formulas of quotation the New Testament writers give expression to their conviction as to the eternal contemporaneity of Scripture. This is manifest in particular in the many (41) instances where the introductory verb is in the present: "He says," and not "he said." This is reinforced by the use of the pronouns "we," "you," in connection with ancient sayings: "That which was spoken unto you by God" (Matthew 22:31); "The Holy

Spirit also beareth witness to us" (Hebrews 10:15; cf. also Matthew 15:7; Mark 7:6; 12:19; Acts 4:11; 13:47; Hebrews 12:5). This implication gains explicit statement in Romans 15:4: "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning" (cf. also Romans 4:23, 24; 1 Corinthians 9:10; 10:11).

The New Testament writers used quotations in their sermons, in their histories, in their letters, in their prayers. They used them when addressing Jews or Gentiles, churches or individuals, friends or antagonists, new converts or seasoned Christians. They used them for argumentation, for illustration, for instruction, for documentation, for prophecy, for reproof. They used them in times of stress and in hours of mature thinking, in liberty and in prison, at home and abroad. Everywhere and always they were ready to refer to the impregnable authority of Scripture.

Jesus Christ himself provides a most arresting example in this respect. At the very threshold of his public ministry, our Lord, in his dramatic victory over Satan's threefold onslaught, rested his whole defense on the authority of three passages of Scripture. He quoted the Old Testament in support of his teaching to the crowds; he quoted it in his discussions with antagonistic Jews; he quoted it in answer to questions both captious and sincere; he quoted it in instructing the disciples who would have readily accepted his teaching on his own authority; he referred to it in his prayers, when alone in the presence of the Father; he quoted it on the cross, when his sufferings could easily have drawn his attention elsewhere; he quoted it in his resurrection glory, when any limitation, real or alleged, of the days of his flesh was clearly superseded. Whatever may be the differences between the pictures of Jesus drawn by the four Gospels, they certainly agree in their representation of our Lord's attitude toward the Old Testament: one of constant use and of unquestioning endorsement of its authority.

## 3. ACCURACY OF OLD TESTAMENT REFERENCES

A difficulty comes to the fore, however, when the New Testament citations are carefully compared with the original Old Testament texts. In their quotations the New Testament writers, it would appear, use considerable freedom, touching both the letter and the meaning of the Old Testament passages.

Opponents of verbal inspiration repeatedly have brought forward this objection mainly in two forms:

1. The New Testament writers, not having taken care to quote in absolute agreement with the original text of the Old Testament, it is urged, cannot have held the doctrine of plenary inspiration. Otherwise they would have shown greater respect for the letter of Scripture.

2. The New Testament writers, in quoting the Old "inaccurately" as to its letter, or "improperly" as to its sense, or both, cannot have been directed to do so by the Spirit of God.

The first argument impugns mainly the inspiration of the Old Testament, the second mainly that of the New. Both will be met if it can be shown that the New Testament method of quotation is entirely proper and consistent with the highest regard for the texts cited. In the present treatment it is possible only to delineate the main principles involved, without showing their application to particular cases. We shall consider first, principles involved in the solution of difficulties arising from the New Testament manner of quoting, after which brief comments will be offered regarding the methods of interpretation exhibited by the New Testament authors in their application of Old Testament passages.

## Form of Quotation

It must be recognized that each of the following principles does not find application in every case, but the writer is of the opinion that, singly or in combination, as the case may be, they provide a very satisfactory explanation of apparent discrepancies in almost all cases, and a possible solution in all cases.

1. The New Testament writers had to translate their quotations. They wrote in Greek and their source of quotations was in Hebrew. They needed therefore either to translate for themselves or to use existing translations. Now no translation can give a completely adequate and coextensive rendering of the original. A certain measure of change is inevitable, even when one is quoting by divine inspiration.

When the New Testament writers wrote, there was one Greek version of the Old Testament, the LXX. It was widespread, well known, and respected in spite of some obvious defects when appraised from the standpoint of modern scholarship. In most cases, it was a fair translation of the Hebrew text, and possessed distinctive literary qualities. Its position in the ancient world is comparable to that of the Authorized Version before the Revised was published. A conscientious scholar writing nowadays in a certain language will use for his quotations from foreign sources the translations which his readers generally use. He will not attempt to correct or change them unless some mistake bears directly on his point. When slight errors or mistranslations occur, generally he will neither discuss them, for in so doing he would tend to direct the reader’s attention away from his point, nor correct them without giving notice, for this might tend to arouse the reader’s suspicion. This practice is followed by many preachers and writers who use the Authorized Version in English or Luther’s translation in German. They are often well aware that some verses rather inadequately render the Hebrew or the Greek, but no blame can be laid on them as long as they base no argument on what is mistaken in the translation. Similarly, the writers of the New Testament could use the LXX, the only Greek version then existing, in spite of its occasional inaccuracy, and even quote passages which were somewhat inaccurately translated. To take advantage of its errors, however, would have been inadmissible. We do not find any example of a New Testament deduction or application logically inferred from the Septuagint and which cannot be maintained on the basis of the Hebrew text.

Some of the recently discovered Dead Sea scrolls at times provide the Hebrew text which underlay the LXX where it differs from the Massoretic text. This is the case, for instance, in Isaiah 53:11, where the scroll Isaiah A reads “He shall see light,” thus supporting the LXX rendering. While great caution is still necessary in any textual emendation of the Massoretic text, the possibility that in some divergent translations the LXX occasionally represents the primitive Hebrew original may be held to have received some support from these discoveries. In such cases, of course, it would not only have been proper for the New Testament writers to quote from the LXX, but this would actually have been preferable.

The use of the LXX in quoting does not indicate that the New Testament writers have thought of this version as inspired in itself. *A fortiori* they did not confer inspiration upon the translation of the passages they have used. Samuel Davidson was laboring under a regrettable confusion when he wrote: “It will ever remain inexplicable by the supporters of verbal inspiration that the words of the LXX became literally inspired as soon as they were taken from that version and transferred to the New Testament pages” (*Sacred Hermeneutics*, Edinburgh, Clark, 1843, p. 515). This statement misconstrues verbal inspiration. When the New Testament authors appealed to Scripture as the Word of God, it is not claimed that they viewed anything but the original communication as vested in full with divine inerrancy. Yet their willingness to make use of the LXX, in spite of its occasional defects, teaches the important lesson that the basic message which God purposed to deliver can be conveyed even through a translation, and that appeal can be made to a version insofar as it agrees with the original. It would be precarious, however, to rest an argument on any part of the LXX quotations which appears not to be conformed to the Hebrew original nor to the point of the New Testament writers, for the mere fact that the quotation was adduced in this fashion was not meant as a divine sanction upon incidental departures from the autographs. In the quotations made from the LXX we have indeed God’s seal of approval upon the contents of the Old Testament passage, but the form of the citation is affected by the language and conditions of those to whom the New Testament was first addressed. Such use of the LXX was not a case of objectionable accommodation. That the inspired Word is accommodated to humanity is an obvious fact: it is written in human languages, uses human comparisons, its parts are conditioned by the circumstances of those to whom they were at first destined, and so forth. But we cannot admit of an accommodation in which inspired writers would give formal assent to error. In their use of the LXX, however, the New Testament authors were so far from actual endorsement of error that the best scholars of all times have used similar methods in adducing translated quotations, as noted above.

The frequent use of the LXX, it must also be noted, did not impose upon the New Testament authors the obligation to quote always in accordance with this version. Whenever they wanted to emphasize an idea which was insufficiently or inadequately rendered in the LXX, they may have retranslated in whole or in part the passage in question. In certain cases the reason for their introduction of changes may remain unknown to us, but we are not on that account in a position to say either that a careful reproduction of the LXX is illegitimate or that a modification of that text is unjustifiable.

2. The New Testament writers did not have the same rules for quotations as are nowadays enforced in works of a scientific character. In particular, they did not have any punctuation signs which are so important in modern usage.

a. They did not have any quotation marks, and thus it is not always possible to ascertain the exact beginning, or the real extent of quotations. They were not obliged to start actual citations immediately after an introductory formula, nor have we a right to affirm that their quotations do not end until every resemblance with the Old Testament text disappears. In certain cases they may very well have made shorter citations than is generally believed, and also may have added developments of their own, retaining some words taken from the original source but not actually intended as part of a quotation. Criticism of such passages if they were not intended as actual citations is manifestly unfair.

b. They did not have any ellipsis marks. Thus special attention is not drawn to the numerous omissions they made. These ellipses, however, are not to be considered as illegitimate on that account.

c. They did not have any brackets to indicate editorial comments introduced in the quotation. Thus we should not be surprised to find intentional additions, sometimes merely of one word, sometimes more extended (cf. Ephesians 6:2).

d. They did not have any footnote references by which to differentiate quotations from various sources. Sometimes we find a mixture of passages of analogous content or wording, but we are not justified on that account in charging the writers with mishandling or misusing the Old Testament.

We readily recognize that the New Testament writers fell into these patterns, whose legitimacy is universally granted, much more than a present-day author would. Modern punctuation rules make such practices tiresome and awkward. One tries nowadays to omit, insert or modify as little as possible in quotations, in order to avoid the complexity of repeated quotation marks, ellipsis marks, brackets, and so forth. Yet this common present usage is by no means a standard by which to judge the ancient writers.

3. The New Testament writers sometimes paraphrased their quotations.

a. Under this heading we might first mention certain cases where we find a free translation of the Hebrew rather than a real paraphrase. Such a procedure certainly needs no justification, since a free translation sometimes renders the sense and impression of the original better than a more literal one.

b. Slight modifications, such as a change of pronouns, a substitution of a noun for a pronoun or vice versa, transformations in the person, the tense, the mood or the voice of verbs, are sometimes introduced in order to better suit the connection in the New Testament. These paraphrases are perhaps the most obviously legitimate of all.

c. There are cases in which the New Testament writers obviously forsake the actual tenor of the Old Testament passage in order to manifest more clearly in what sense they were construing it. In this they are quite in agreement with the best modern usage, as represented, for example, in W.G. Campbell, *A Form Book for Thesis Writing* (New York, Houghton Mifflin 1939): "A careful paraphrase that does complete justice to the source is preferable to a long quotation" (p. 15).

d. In certain cases the New Testament writers do not refer to a single passage, but rather summarize the general teaching of the canonical books on certain subjects in phrasing appropriate to the New Testament, although as to the essential thought they express indebtedness to, or agreement with, the Old Testament. This method of referring to the Old Testament teachings is obviously legitimate. The following passages might be viewed as examples of "quotations of substance," as Franklin Johnson calls them in his able treatise on *The Quotations of the New Testament from the Old Considered in the Light of General Literature* (London, Baptist Tract and Book Society, 1896): Matthew 2:23; 5:31, 33; 12:3, 5; 19:7; 22:24; 24:15; 26:24, 54, 56; Mark 2:25; 9:12, 13;10:4; 12:19; 14:21, 49; Luke 2:22; 6:3; 11:49; 18:31; 20:28; 21:22; 24:27, 32, 44-46; John 1:45; 5:39, 46; 7:38, 42; 8:17; 17:12; 19:7, 28; 20:9; Acts 1:16; 3:18; 7:51; 13:22, 29; 17:2, 3; Romans 3:10; 1 Corinthians 2:9; 14:34; 15:3, 4, 25-27; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Galatians 3:22; 4:22; Ephesians 5:14; James 4:5; 2 Peter 3:12, 13.

e. Finally, we must consider the possibility that the writers of the New Testament, writing or speaking for people well acquainted with the Old, may in certain cases have intended simply to refer their readers or hearers to a well-known passage of Scripture. Then, in order to suggest it to their memory they may have accurately cited therefrom some expressions, which they then placed in a general frame different from that of the original. At times the actual words quoted may have been intended merely or primarily to indicate the location of a passage, as the general context of the Old Testament in which the stipulated truth could be found, rather than as an express citation.

4. The New Testament writers often simply alluded to Old Testament passages without intending to quote them. It was quite natural that people nurtured and steeped in the oracles of God should instinctively use forms of language and turns of thought reminiscent of Old Testament Scripture.

> The speakers or writers, in such eases, do not profess to give forth the precise words and meaning of former revelations; their thoughts and language merely derived from these the form and direction, which by a kind of sacred instinct they took; and it does not matter for any purpose, for which the inspired oracles were given, whether the portions thus appropriated might or might not be very closely followed, and used in connections somewhat different from those in which they originally stood (Patrick Fairbairn, *Hermeneutical Manual*, Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1858, p. 355).

Only in cases where the New Testament authors definitely manifest the intention of citing by the use of a formula of introduction can we require any strong degree of conformity.

With respect to what might be viewed as formulas of introduction, the following remarks may be made:

a. Only a quotation which immediately follows such a formula is to be certainly considered as a formal citation. In cases of successive quotations “and again” always introduces an actual citation (Romans 15:11; 1 Corinthians 3:20; Hebrews 1:5; 2:13; 10:30), but in the case of “and” or “but,” or of successive quotations without any intervening link, criticisms are quite precarious, since no formal quotation may be intended.

b. Even when a definite formula points directly to an Old Testament passage, we may not expect strict adherence to the letter of the source when this quotation is recorded in indirect rather than in direct discourse. In such cases we often find remarkable verbal accuracy, but we cannot criticize departure from the original when the very form of the sentence so naturally allows for it.

c. When what may appear to be a citation is introduced by a form of the verbs “say” or “speak,” it is not always certain that the writer actually intended to quote. Rather, the possibility must at times be taken into consideration that we are facing an informal reference to some saying recorded in Scripture. Perhaps some of the clearest examples along this line may be found in the discourse of Stephen in Acts 7, in which free references are made to sayings of God, of Moses, and of the Jews, woven in the survey of covenant history presented by the first martyr. In Acts 7:26, a declaration of Moses is mentioned which is not found at all in the Old Testament and obviously was not intended as an actual quotation. In all cases of this type it must certainly be acknowledged that a considerable measure of freedom is legitimate and that one could scarcely expect here the exactness looked for in actual citations. The following passages may belong to this category: Matthew 2:23; 15:4; 22:32; 24:15; Mark 12:26; Acts 3:25; 7:3, 5-7, 26-28, 32-35, 40; 13:22; Romans 9:15; 11:4; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Galatians 3:8; Hebrews 1:5, 13; 6:14; 8:5; l0:30; 12:21, 26; 13:5; James 2:11; 1 Peter 3:6; Jude 1:14.

5. The New Testament authors sometimes recorded quotations made by others. Not all quotations in the New Testament are introduced by the writers themselves for the purpose of illustrating their narrative or bolstering their argument. Sometimes they record quotations made by the personalities who appear in the history, as by Jesus, Paul, Peter, James, Stephen, the Jews, and Satan. In two cases we have a record of a reading -- Luke 4:18, 19 and Acts 8:32, 33. The New Testament writers had at their disposal at least three legitimate methods of recording such quotations:

a. They could translate them directly from the original text;

b. They could use the existing Septuagint and quote according to this version, as suggested earlier;

c. They could translate directly from the form used by the person quoting, often presumably an Aramaic translation of the Hebrew text. A few words are needed here only with reference to the last possibility. Of course, we expect the persons quoting, at least those who were inspired (Jesus, Paul, Peter, James and probably Stephen), to quote accurately, so that in these cases no divergence from the original can be explained by the mere fact that somebody else's quotation is recorded. Since, however, probably most of these quotations were originally made in Aramaic according to a current oral or written Aramaic translation, certain discrepancies between the Old Testament and the New, which cannot be accounted for on the basis of the Septuagint, may have their true explanation in the use of this probable Aramaic version.

6. Other principles whose application must be limited. Under this heading we need to consider briefly three additional principles of explanation of apparent discrepancies between the text of the Old Testament and that of the New. These principles, in the writer's opinion, may well be at times the ground of a legitimate explanation, but they ought to be handled with utmost discrimination, lest the assured present authority of Scripture appear to be placed in jeopardy.

a. The texts may have been altered in the process of transmission. We have ample reasons to be grateful for the marvelous state of conservation of the text of Scripture: the New Testament possesses a degree of certainty no doubt unequalled by any other ancient text transmitted to us by manuscript; the Hebrew Old Testament has been the object of the loving and painstaking watchcare of the Jews and the accuracy of the Massoretie text has been confirmed in a striking way by the Dead Sea scrolls. Nevertheless, it is conceivable that at times an early mistake in copying may have vitiated our texts, thereby introducing a discrepancy which was not present in the autographs. Still, it would be very injudicious to indulge in unrestrained corrections of the texts on the ground of the quotations, and the present writer has not found any instance in the New Testament where such a correction might appear as the only possible legitimate explanation of a quotation difficulty.

b. In the quotations, as well as in other inspired texts, the personality of the writers has been respected. It is an unsearchable mystery that the Holy Spirit could inspire the sacred writings so as to communicate his inerrancy to their very words and, at the same time, respect the freedom and personality of the writers so that we might easily recognize their style and their characteristics. The same thing is true of the quotations, for there also we may discern the individuality of the writers in their use of them, in the sources quoted, and in the method of quoting. There is, however, a dangerous distortion of this principle in the appeal made by some to slips of memory in order to explain certain difficulties in the quotations. Now the very idea of a slip of memory undermines seriously the whole structure of inerrancy and is therefore out of keeping with a consistent upholding of plenary verbal inspiration. In fact, as C. H. Toy himself recognized -- and he cannot easily

be charged with undue bias in favor of the conservative view of Scripture I -- so many quotations show verbal agreement with the LXX "that we must suppose either that they were made from a written text, or, if not, that the memory of the writers was very accurate" (*Quotations in the New Testament*, p. xx).

c. The Spirit of God was free to modify the expressions that he inspired in the Old Testament. While this is no doubt true with respect to the interpretation of Old Testament passages and with respect to allusions or distant references, the statement should not be made too glibly with respect to quotations, and some conservative writers may have been too prone to advocate this approach when other less precarious solutions might be advanced. Nevertheless, in this connection, one may well give assent to the judgment of Patrick Fairbairn:

> Even in those cases in which, for anything we can see, a closer translation would have served equally well the purpose of the writer, it may have been worthy of the inspiring Spirit, and perfectly consistent with the fullest inspiration of the original Scriptures, that the sense should have been given in a free current translation; for the principle was thereby sanctioned of a rational freedom in the handling of Scripture, as opposed to the rigid formalism and superstitious regard to the letter, which prevailed among the Rabbinical Jews.... The stress occasionally laid in the New Testament upon particular words in passages of the Old... sufficiently proves what a value attaches to the very form of the Divine communication, and how necessary it is to connect the element of inspiration with the written record as it stands. It shows that God's words are pure words, and that, if fairly interpreted, they cannot be too closely pressed. But in other cases, when nothing depended upon a rigid adherence to the letter, the practice of the sacred writers, not scrupulously to stickle about this, but to give prominence simply to the substance of the revelation, is fraught also with an important lesson; since it teaches us, that the letter is valuable only for the truth couched in it, and that the one is no further to be prized and contended for, than may be required for the exhibition of the other (*op. cit.*, pp. 413 f.).

### Meaning of the Old Testament Passages

It has been urged at times that the New Testament writers have flouted the proper laws of hermeneutics, have been guilty of artificial and rabbinical exegesis, and thus have repeatedly distorted the meaning of the Old Testament passages which they quote.

1. This type of objection may appear at first more weighty than those which affect merely the wording of the quotations, since an alleged discrepancy in meaning is more grievous than a mere divergence of form. Yet the problems raised in this area are probably less embarrassing to the advocates of plenary inspiration, since a verbal comparison is largely a matter of plain fact, while the assessment of the full extent of the meaning of a passage calls for the exercise of human individual judgment and fallible opinion. Few Christians, it

is hoped, will have the presumption of setting forth their own interpretation as normative, when it runs directly counter to that of the Lord Jesus or of his apostles.

2. There is obviously a deep underlying relationship between the Old Testament and the New: one purpose pervades the whole Bible and also the various phases of human history, more especially of Israel. Thus the Old Testament can and must be considered, even in its historical narratives, as a source of prefigurements and of prophecies. It has been widely acknowledged that, in spite of certain difficult passages, the New Testament interpretation of the Old manifests a strikingly illuminating understanding of Old Testament Scripture. C. H. Dodd, although not a defender of verbal inspiration, could write: “In general... the writers of the New Testament, in making use of passages from the Old Testament, remain true to the main intention of their writers” (*According to the Scriptures*, London, Nisbet, 1952, p. 130). And again: “We have before us a considerable intellectual feat. The various scriptures are acutely interpreted along lines already discernible within the Old Testament canon itself or in pre-Christian Judaism -- in many cases, I believe, lines which start from their first, historical, intention -- and these lines are carried forward to fresh results” (*ibid.* , p. 109).

3. There are certain Old Testament passages in which the connection with the New Testament is so clear that there can hardly be doubt about their applicability and about the fact that the Old Testament writers foresaw some events or some principles of the new covenant. This is not necessary in every case, however, and the Spirit of God may very well have inspired expressions which potentially transcended the thoughts of the sacred writers and of those to whom they addressed themselves. This certainly occurred in the case of Caiaphas (John 11:49-52), and there is no ground to deny the possibility of such a process in the inspiration of the Old Testament Scripture.

4. While the doctrine of verbal inspiration requires that we should accept any New Testament interpretation of an Old Testament text as legitimate, it does not require that such interpretation be necessarily viewed as exclusive or exhaustive of the full Old Testament meaning. In many cases the New Testament makes a particular application of principles stated in the Old, whose fulfillment is accomplished in more than a single event. Thus certain Old Testament prophecies may have conveyed to the original hearers a meaning more restricted than the perspective opened in the New Testament pages. The original understanding was a legitimate interpretation of the prophecy, yet one which does not preclude the propriety of the larger vistas, authoritatively revealed in the New Testament.

5. Not all the passages quoted in the New Testament are necessarily to be considered as definite prophecies, but many are cited as simply characterizing in a striking way the New Testament situation. At times the New Testament writers may have simply used Old Testament language without intending to imply that there is a distinct relationship of prophecy to fulfillment, or of antitype to type.

6. Writing about this subject, C. H. Toy makes a remark which he apparently intends only with respect to apostolic times, but which may well be viewed as having more general reference: “The deeper the reverence for the departed Lord and for the divine word, the greater the disposition to find him everywhere” (*op. cit.*, p. xxv). Conservatives hope that, judged by this standard, they will not be found to have less reverence for their Lord and for the divine Word than the New Testament writers!

In conclusion, one could wish to quote at length some remarks of B. B. Warfield (*op. cit.*, pp. 218-220), which for the sake of brevity we shall be constrained to summarize here. The student of Scripture is not bound to provide the solution of all the difficulties which he encounters in the Bible. It is better to leave matters unharmonized than to have recourse to strained or artificial exegesis. Even when no solution of a difficulty is offered, we are not thereby driven to assume that the problem is insoluble.

> Every unharmonized passage remains a case of difficult harmony and does not pass into the category of objections to plenary inspiration. It can pass into the category of objections only if we are prepared to affirm that we clearly see that it is, on any conceivable hypothesis of its meaning, clearly inconsistent with the Biblical doctrine of inspiration. In that case we would no doubt need to give up the Biblical doctrine of inspiration; but with it we must also give up our confidence in the Biblical writers as teachers of doctrine” (*ibid.*, p. 220).

It has been the writer’s privilege to devote substantial time to the consideration of all quotations of the Old Testament in the New. This study has led him to the conclusion that the principles mentioned above can provide in every case a possible explanation of the difficulties at hand in perfect harmony with the doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture. There is no claim here that all the difficulties are readily dispelled, or that we are in possession of the final solution of every problem. Nevertheless, possible if not plausible explanations are at hand in every case known to the present writer. It is therefore with some confidence that this presentation is made. In fact, the quotations, which are often spoken of as raising one of the major difficulties against the view of plenary inspiration, upon examination turn out to be a confirmation of this doctrine rather than an invalidation of it. To this concurs the judgment of men who can surely be quoted as impartial witnesses, in statements such as the following, made precisely with reference to Old Testament quotations in the New:

> We know, from the general tone of the New Testament, that it regards the Old Testament, as all the Jews then did, as the revealed and inspired word of God, and clothed with his authority (C. H. Toy, *op. cit.*, p. xxx).

> Our authors view the words of the Old Testament as immediate words of God, and introduce them explicitly as such, even those which are not in the least related as sayings of God. They see nothing in the sacred book, which is merely the word of the human authors and not at the same time the very

> word of God Himself. In everything that stands “written,” God Himself is speaking to them (R. Rothe, *Zur Dogmatik*, Gotha, Perthes, 1869, pp. 177 f.).
>
> In quoting the Old Testament, the New Testament writers proceed consistently from the presupposition that they have Holy Scripture in hand.... The actual author is God or the Holy Spirit, and both, as also frequently the *graphe*, are represented as speaking either directly or through the Old Testament writers (E. Huehn, *Die Alttestamentlichen Citate... im Neuen Testament*, Tübingen, Mohr, 1900, p. 272).

Such statements, coming as they are from the pen of men who were not at all inclined to favor the conservative approach to the Scripture, are no do

## 6 Edersheim Septuagint Errors and Question of its Inspiration

In 1886, Alfred Edersheim wrote The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah. This was a highly scholarly work by a devout Christian gentleman.

He explained the background on the translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek in what we know as the Septuagint Bible. He claims that all we reliably know about it origin is that it was commissioned under the reign of a particular Pharoah in Egypt around at least 247 BC. The contention that it was done by 6 translators for each of the 12 tribes, totaling 72, is contained in a spurious letter says Edersheim, thus implying it is not reliable truth. (The Life and Times of Jesus, *supra*, at 25.)

Next, Edersheim explains that the Septuagint was not divided as the original Hebrew Bible. The Original Bible is divided into the law, prophets and writings. Instead, the Septuagint was divided into 3 different compartments called the historical, prophetical, and poetical.

Next, the Septuagint also had a loose view of inspiration because it even admitted the Apocrypha into this Greek Bible.

Edersheim then begins to identify quality issues, pointing out that that "it differs in almost innumerable instances from our own," *i.e.* , the Hebrew Bible. (The Life and Times of Jesus, *supra*, at page 27.)

In terms of the quality of the translation, Edersheim explains that it is clear that the Septuagint "is inferior" and sides in favor of a "slavish and false literalism," while "there is great Liberty, if not license, in handling the original text." And Edersheim adds that "gross mistakes occur along with happy renderings of very

difficult passages....." (The Life and Times of Jesus, *supra*, at page 27.) These are often "unsatisfactory."

At times there are adaptations to Greek philosophical ideas. For example "even Siegfried is obliged to admit that the rendering in Genesis 1:2 bears undeniable marks of Grecian philosophical views." (**Life and Times of Jesus**, *supra*, at page 28 note 1.)

Then Edersheim continues, saying that "difficulties - or what seems such - are removed by the most bold method, and by free handling of the text," and does so "often very unsatisfactorily." (Life and Times of Jesus, *supra*, at 28.)

Edersheim adds that the Septuagint translation became regarded as inspired by the Jews living in the Greek speaking world. Then Edersheim comments:

> "Only that we must not regard their views of inspiration - except as applying to Moses, and even there only partially - is identical with ours. To their minds inspiration differed quantitatively, not qualitatively, from what the rapt soul might at any time experience, so the heathen Philosopher may ultimately be regarding as at times inspired." (Life and Times of Jesus, supra, at page 29.)

Finally, on the issue of accuracy, Edersheim says that despite this high early regard, "later voices in the synagogue declared this version to have been as great a calamity to Israel as the making of the golden calf." (Life and Times of Messiah, *supra*, page 30.)

### Origen In About 217 AD Says Jews Dissatisfied with Septuagint Too

In an article at Coptic Church.com, we read: "In Hom 12:5: 5:8; 7:5, and 12:4, Origen points out that the Jews have rejected part of the Septuagint." (See link.)

### Jerome Identifies Errors

In the late 300s AD, Jerome affirms that the Hebrew Bible text in the fourth century read differently than the Septuagtint of two passages. For example, Isaiah 11:1 in Hebrew said “He shall be called a Nazarene” which Jerome says Matthew 2:23 was quoting. But the Septuagint lacks this. Another passage is Proverbs 18:4 which in the Septuagint no longer reads “Rivers of living water shall flow out of his belly.” Jerome was saying these Messianic texts quoted by the apostles were all missing in the Septuagint but were present in the Hebrew text in Jerome’s hands in the Fourth Century.

What is more startling is that apparently due to the influence of Augustine, Jerome's Latin Vulgate translation of 405 A.D. was evidently tampered with. This is demonstrable because these verses (Isaiah 11:1, Proverbs 18:4) which are cited by Jerome as proof of **Septuagint corruption** are shockingly left to read in the Latin Vulgate in the form that Jerome says was a Septuagint corruption.
Thus, Roman Catholicism which later adopted and published the Latin Vulgate published a version of Jerome's Latin Vulgate that had verses which Jerome in his letters had vigorously disputed as corrupted. We do not know why. Or do we? For, is it merely coincidence that Augustine was the leading formulator after 325 A.D. of Roman Catholic doctrine and was its most influential bishop at the time the Roman church adopted the Latin Vulgate of Jerome as the official Bible? Is it important that Augustine vigorously dissented from Jerome's efforts, and tried previously to instruct him to use only the Septuagint but received strong rebuke from Jerome?
On Augustine's vigorous opposition to using the Hebrew for Jerome's translation sent in a letter to Jerome, see Augustine, **Letter LXXI**, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (First Series) Vol. 1.
It appears Augustine had the last laugh in the debate with Jerome, having the power to change the Vulgate to match the Septuagint. For Jerome died in 419 A.D. and Augustine in 430 A.D.

## Why Push the Septuagint At Odds With Hebrew Scripture?

What was Augustine's or anyone else's motive to make the Latin Vulgate match only the Septuagint? Why make the Septuagint version control over the Hebrew? In these two cases, John 7:38 and Matthew 2:25, if you use the Septuagint, you **subtract** two Messianic prophecies (Isaiah 11:1, Proverbs 18:4) that in Jerome's day were only in the Hebrew Canon. By doing so, you also make two of the twelve apostles look like liars for quoting these passages. What was the priority? By the 300s, it became a priority to protect only Paul even at the expense of Matthew and John's credibility. For the choice confronting Augustine (and he knew the issue directly from Jerome) was that **if the Septuagint was in error, Paul is uninspired** for foolishly always quoting from it or a similar passage at odds with the Hebrew Bible (and so too the apostles when made to appear personally quoting such Septuagint Scripture).

However, if you rely upon the Septuagint above the Hebrew canon, you can maintain Paul's inspired nature but at the expense of making Matthew and John look in error when more properly quoting the Hebrew Scriptures (tampered with by the Septuagint). This is because John 7:38 and Matthew 2:25 would be quoting completely non-existant verses in the Septuagint being compelled to guide the Latin Vulgate. That's a far cry from merely quoting a text that is defectively translated in the Septuagint. Paul survives, but Matthew and John take devastating hits in the Latin Vulgate if one has a critical eye. Do you see the priority?

### The Septuagint Differences & How They Prove Paul's Fallibility

However, clearly the main reason Augustine or others altered the Vulgate to match the Septuagint was to maintain the notion that even when not quoting Jesus, the so-called apostle Paul was infallible. The King James Bible's introduction says of the Septuagint, "the apostles habitually quoted from it..." What they really mean is Paul and sometimes the Greek translator of Matthew or apostles in their letters quote the Septuagint, even when materially different from the Hebrew Scripture. I suspect Augustine 'fixed' these manuscripts too to match the Septuagint. Even if the original, as I have said before, Jesus never tells us the twelve apostles are inspired prophets when not quoting Jesus. Hence, they might erroneously rely upon the Septuagint even when it differs substantially from the Hebrew canon. The Hebrew canon controls.

For Paulinists, however, Paul's reliability hangs in the balance. He rarely if ever quotes Jesus. If all his arguments (which we will see below depends on citing the defective Septuagint **twenty-nine times**) are just himself talking, what would happen to Paul as part of canon? The gospel writers enjoyed authority because they quoted Jesus. They could withstand scrutiny and still be validly inspired when quoting Jesus even if Christians knew their commentary was not necessarily inspired. Yet, what would happen to Paul? He would disappear for nothing he says is dependent on Jesus himself, and entirely relies upon defective Septuagint readings. Thus, for Paulinists like Augustine, the Latin Vulgate just had to match the Septuagint to save Paul. However, if we accept the Septuagint as inspired, then Roman Catholics can justly claim the Apocrypha is part of Scripture. The Apocrypha was accepted by the state-appointed translators of the Septuagint as inspired text.

What a quandry we end up in when we try to defend Paul as inspired. To be consistent, if we want the Septuagint to be inspired to save Paul, we have to also accept what obviously was uninspired (the Apocrypha) be regarded as part of Scripture because the Apocrypha was part of the Septuagint. What an ugly choice! Which is why the solution proposed in my **Jesus' Words Only** book works best: Paul is uninspired unless quoting Jesus validly. Since Paul never does, Paul does not belong in the list of inspired canon.
So, if you concur with me that if Paul accepted a defective translation of the Hebrew canon in the Septuagint, **this proves his fallibility.** Here is a partial list of twenty-nine quotations in Paul's writings that come from the Septuagint at odds with the Hebrew:

- Rom. 2:24 / Isaiah 52:5 - Paul quotes Septuagint that the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles. In Hebrew Bible - blasphemed (there is no mention of the Gentiles).
- Rom. 3:4 / Psalm 51:4 - Paul quotes Septuagint thou mayest "prevail" (or overcome) when thou art judged. In Hebrew it reads - thou might "be clear" when thou judges.

- Rom. 3:12 / Psalm 14:1,3 - quotes Septuagint (S) they have gone wrong." But Hebrew Bible (Hebrew B) says - they are "corrupt" or "filthy."
- Rom. 3:13 / Psalm 5:9 - quotes S they use their tongues to deceive. Hebrew B - they flatter with their tongues. There is no "deceit" language.
- Rom. 3:13 / Psalm 140:3 - quotes S the venom of "asps" is under their lips. Hebrew B - "Adder's" poison is under their lips.
- Rom. 3:14 / Psalm 10:7 - quotes S - whose mouth is full of curses and "bitterness." Hebrew B - cursing and "deceit and oppression."
- Rom. 9:25 / Hosea 2:23 - quotes S -- I will call my people; I will call my beloved. Hebrew B -- I will have mercy (love versus mercy).
- Rom. 9:27 / Isaiah 10:22 - ***only a remnant of them "will be saved." Hebrew - only a remnant of them "will return."***
- Rom. 9:29 / Isaiah 1:9 - S -- had not left us "children." Hebrew B - Yahweh had left us a "very small remnant."

- Rom. 9:33; 10:11; 1 Peter 2:6 / Isaiah 28:16 - S -- he who believes will not be “put to shame.” Hebrew B - shall not be “in haste.”
- Rom. 10:18 / Psalm 19:4 - S -- their “voice” has gone out. Hebrew B - their “line” is gone out.
- Rom. 10:20 / Isaiah 65:1 - S -- I have “shown myself” to those who did not ask for me. Hebrew B - I am “inquired of” by them.
- Rom. 10:21 / Isaiah 65:2 - S -- a “disobedient and contrary” people. Hebrew B - a “rebellious” people.
- Rom. 11:9-10 / Psalm 69:22-23 S -- “pitfall” and “retribution” and “bend their backs.” Hebrew B -- “trap” and “make their loins shake.”
- Rom. 11:26 / Isaiah 59:20 - S -- will banish "ungodliness." Hebrew B -- turn from "transgression."
- Rom. 11:27 / Isaiah 27:9 - S -- when I take away their sins. Hebrew B -- this is all the fruit of taking away his sin.
- Rom. 11:34; 1 Cor. 2:16 / Isaiah 40:13 S -- the "mind" of the Lord; His "counselor." Hebrew B -- "spirit" of the Lord; "taught" Him.
- Rom. 12:20 / Prov. 25:21 - S -- feed him and give him to drink. Hebrew B -- give him "bread" to eat and "water" to drink.
- Rom. 15:12 / Isaiah 11:10 S -- the root of Jesse..."to rule the Gentiles." Hebrew B -- stands for an ensign. There is nothing about the Gentiles.
- Rom. 15:21 / Isaiah 52:15 - S -- been told "of him"; heard "of him." Hebrew B -- does not mention "him" (the object of the prophecy).
- 1 Cor. 1:19 / Isaiah 29:14 - S -- "I will destroy" the wisdom of the wise. Hebrew B - wisdom of their wise men "shall perish."It
- 1 Cor. 15:55 / Hosea 13:14 - S -- O death, where is thy "sting?" Hebrew - O death, where are your "plagues?"
- 2 Cor. 4:13 / Psalm 116:10 - S -- I believed and so I spoke (past tense). Hebrew - I believe, for I will speak (future tense).
- 2 Cor. 6:2 / Isaiah 49:8 - S -- I have "listened" to you. Hebrew - I have "answered" you.
- Gal. 3:10 / Deut. 27:26 - S -- **cursed be every one who does not "abide" by all things. Hebrew - does not "confirm" the words.**
- Gal. 3:13 / Deut. 21:23 - S -- ***cursed is everyone who hangs on a "tree." Hebrew - a hanged man is des0ised. The word "tree" does not follow.***

- Gal. 4:27 / Isaiah 54:1 - S -- "rejoice" and "break forth and shout." Hebrew - "sing" and "break forth into singing."
- 2 Tim. 2:19 / Num. 16:5 - S -- The Lord "knows" those who are His. Hebrew - God will "show" who are His.

The bolded verses above are verses where using the Septuagint materially impacted Paul's salvation doctrine.

### Conclusion

Edersheim is further confirmation from a true Christian scholar that the Septuagint was an unreliable translation, and obviously not inspired in any respect. The evidence from Jerome is likewise. The main impetus to hold onto the Septuagint is that Paul quoted it frequently, basing key doctrines on texts that in the original Hebrew do not support the doctrinal point Paul cited the Septuagint version to establish.

## Study Notes ….

Paul in Romans used largely the Septuagint. You can tell by the way he renders Joel 2:32 in Romans 10:9-13, and by the way he renders Isaiah 45:23 in Romans 14:8-11.

On a very scholarly analysis of the mistranslation tendency by the Septuagint translator(s) into Greek, amidst some fine turns of phrases, see Isaac Leo Zeligman, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah* (Brill, 1949) at 43-44.

### Other Septuagint Errors

One of the 10 commandments prohibits "murder." But the Septuagint prohibits if you "kill" -- and it is unclear what. This opens up the question whether killing animals for food is ok. I have people write me, telling me I am going to hell because I have eaten meat, and because I don't think there is anything morally wrong eating meat that was killed. The Wikipedia does a good job on this in its "thou shall not kill" article -- where LXX is an abbreviation of Septuagint:

> **Thou shalt not kill** (LXX; phoneo ), **You shall not murder** (Hebrew ratzákh) or **You shall not kill** (KJV), is a moral imperative included as one of the Ten Commandments in the Torah,[1] specifically Exodus 20:13 and Deuteronomy 5:17.

The Bible excuses killings of humans, and thus there is a clear difference between this commandment against murder and these exceptions:

> The Hebrew Bible contains numerous prohibitions against unlawful killing, but also allows for justified killing in the context of warfare, capital punishment, and self-defense. *Id.*

The Hebrew word **ratzach** is never used to refer to killing in war. *Id.* Hence, it does not come within the prohibition of "thou shall not murder (ratzach)."
Here is the email exchange I received on this topic, claiming I was not truly born again because I have eaten meat, and my response. By the way I have been vegan for six years now. I respect this person's moral feelings but his conclusion overplays what the Bible actually says.

**Septuagint Dating & Later Most Influential and Terrible Mistranslation of All.**
The early edition of the Septuagint was completed somewhere during the reign of Philadelphus. He reigned from 285-247 BC. See "Bible Translations," Jewish Encyclopedia (accessed 7/17/2016.).

Hence, typically, the dominant edition is said to have been completed by at least 247 B.C. However, in approximately the 1st Century BC, the name "Yahweh" still appeared. (See Manuscript 4Q120 of Septuagint.)

But by the time of Christ, the Septuagint erroneously and systematically replaced, and hence mistranslated, the name "Yahweh" over 6800 times with the word KYRIOS - a word meaning "Lord" -- a word that means simply master.
See Tetragrammaton at Wikipedia.
The influence of this mistake is **enormous**. Virtually no English Bible except that of the Jehovah Witnesses reveals the original Hebrew is a specific name -- YAHWEH [YAH ALMIGHTY] -- rather than the ambiguous term "Lord" that replaced it. Virtually no one claiming to be a Christian today knows God's name is "YAHWEH" rather than "Lord."
The only time it is spoken in church is when singing a particular Hebrew compound word. Yet, the singers are completely unaware they are doing so. This is when they sing HALLELU-YAH. This literally means PRAISE YAH.. Or more poetically, God's personal name of YAH be Praised. This example shows in

Hebrew that Yah is a permissible short form, revealing that WEH is understood as a characteristic of YAH - apparently meaning ALMIGHTY.

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**Zechariah 12:10 - Messianic Prophecy Missing Meaning in Septuagint**

In the Hebrew, as rendered in the Revised Standard Version, we read a clear prophesy about Jesus:

> **10** "And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of compassion and supplication, so that, when they ***look on him whom they have pierced***, they shall mourn ***for him***, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a first-born. (Zech 12:10 RSV)

However, in the Septuagint Greek translation of 247 BC, this meaning is entirely lost:

> "They shall ***look upon me,*** because they have mocked me, and they shall make ***lamentation for him***, as for a beloved [friend], and they shall grieve intensely, as for a firstborn [son]." (Zech. 12:10, Septuagint, Zondervan, 1976 printing.)

In other words in the Septuagint, they will look upon God whom they have mocked [not "pierced" which is missing entirely in the verse] as their judgment arrives

FYI: There are some Hebrew manuscripts that say "look on me" but the evidence from the early commentators proves which variant is older and hence correct. Ignatius,Irenaeus, and Tertullian (repeatedly) rendered Zech. 12:10 as "him whom they pierced"!

## 7. Edersheim Life and Times

**CHAPTER II.**

THE JEWISH DISPERSION IN THE WEST - THE HELLENISTS - ORIGIN OF HELLENIST LITERATURE IN THE GREEK TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE - CHARACTER OF THE SEPTUAGINT.

When we turn from the Jewish 'dispersion' in the East to that in the West, we seem to breathe quite a different atmosphere. Despite their intense nationalism, all unconsciously to themselves, their mental characteristics and tendencies were in the opposite direction from those of their brethren. With those of the East rested the future of Judaism; with them of the West, in a sense, that of the world. The one represented old Israel, stretching forth its hands to where the dawn of a new

day was about to break. These Jews of the West are known by the term *Hellenists* - from λληνίζειν, to conform to the language and manners of the Greeks.[1]

Whatever their religious and social isolation, it was, in the nature of thing, impossible that the Jewish communities in the West should remains unaffected by Grecian culture and modes of thought; just as, on the other hand, the Greek world, despite popular hatred and the contempt of the higher classes, could not wholly withdraw itself from Jewish influences. Witness here the many converts to Judaism among the Gentiles;[2] witness also the evident preparedness of the lands of this 'dispersion' for the new doctrine which was to come from Judea. Many causes contributed to render the Jews of the West accessible to Greek influences. They had not a long local history to look back upon, nor did they form a compact body, like their brethren in the East. They were craftsmen, traders, merchants, settled for a time here or there - units might combine into communities, but could not form one people. Then their position was not favourable to the sway of traditionalism. Their occupations, the very reasons for their being in a 'strange land,' were purely secular. That lofty absorption of thought and life in the study of the Law, written and oral, which characterised the East, was to the, something in the dim distance, sacred, like the soil and the institutions of Palestine, but unattainable. In Palestine or Babylonia numberless influences from his earliest years, all that he saw and heard, the very force of circumstances, would tend to make an earnest Jew a disciple of the Rabbis; in the West it would lead him to 'hellenise.' It was, so to speak, 'in the air'; and he could no more shut his mind against Greek thought than he could withdraw his body from atmospheric influences. That restless, searching, subtle Greek intellect would penetrate everywhere, and flash its light into the innermost recesses of his home and Synagogue.

To be sure, they were intensely Jewish, these communities of strangers. Like our scattered colonists in distant lands, they would cling with double affection to the customs of their home, and invest with the halo of tender memories the sacred traditions of their faith. The Grecian Jew might well look with contempt, not unmingled with pity, on the idolatrous rites practised around, from which long ago the pitiless irony of Isaiah had torn the veil of beauty, to show the hideousness and unreality beneath. The dissoluteness of public and private life, the frivolity and aimlessness of their pursuits, political aspirations, popular assemblies, amusements - in short, the utter decay of society, in all its phases, would lie open to his gaze. It is in terms of lofty scorn, not unmingled with indignation, which only occasionally gives way to the softer mood of warning, or even invitation, that Jewish Hellenistic literature, whether in the Apocrypha or in its Apocalyptic utterances, address heathenism.

From that spectacle the Grecian Jew would turn with infinite satisfaction - not to say, pride - to his own community, to think of its spiritual enlightenment, and to pass in review its exclusive privileges.[3] It was with no uncertain steps that he would go past those splendid temples to his own humbler Synagogue, pleased to find himself there surrounded by those who shared his descent, his faith, his hopes; and gratified to see their number swelled by many who, heathens by birth, had learned the error of their ways, and now, so to speak, humbly stood as suppliant 'strangers of the gate,' to seek admission into his sanctuary.[4] How different were the rites which he practised, hallowed in their Divine origin, rational in themselves, and at the same time deeply significant, from the absurd superstitions around. Who could have compared with the voiceless, meaningless, blasphemous heathen worship, if it deserved the name, that of the Synagogue, with its pathetic hymns, its sublime liturgy, its Divine Scriptures, and those 'stated sermons' which 'instructed in virtue and piety,' of which not only Philo,[5] Agrippa,[6] and Josephus,[7] speak as a regular institution, but whose antiquity and general prevalence is attested in Jewish writings,[8] and nowhere more strongly than in the book of the Acts of the Apostles?

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[1] Indeed, the word *Alnisti* (or *Alunistin*) - 'Greek' - actually occurs, as in Jer. Sot. 21 *b*, line 14 from bottom. Böhl (Forsch. n. ein. Volksb. p. 7) quotes Philo (Leg. ad Caj. p. 1023) in proof that he regarded the Eastern dispersion as a branch separate from the Palestinians. But the passage does not convey to me the inference which he draws from it. Dr. Guillemard (Hebraisms in the Greek Test.) on Acts vi. 1, agreeing with Dr. Roberts, argues that the term 'Hellenist' indicated only principles, and not birthplace, and that there were Hebrews and Hellenists in and out of Palestine. But this view is untenable.

[2] An account of this propaganda of Judaism and of its results will be given in another connection.

[3] St. Paul fully describes these feelings in the Epistle to the Romans.

[4] The '*Gerey haShaar*,' proselytes of the gate, a designation which some have derived from the circumstance that Gentiles were not allowed to advance beyond the Temple Court, but more likely to be traced to such passages as Ex. xx. 10; Deut. xiv. 21; xxiv. 14.

[5] De Vita Mosis, p. 685; Leg ad Caj. p. 1014.

[6] Leg. ad Caj. p. 1035.

[7] Ag. Apion ii. 17.

[8] Comp. here Targ. Jon. on Judg. v. 2, 9. I feel more hesitation in appealing to such passages as Ber. 19 *a*, where we read of a Rabbi in Rome, Thodos (Theudos?), who flourished several generations before Hillel, for reasons which the passage itself will suggest to the student. At the time of Philo, however, such instructions in the Synagogues at Rome were a long, established institution (Ad Caj. p. 1014).

And in these Synagogues, how would 'brotherly love' be called out, since, if one member suffered, all might soon be affected, and the danger which threatened one community would, unless averted, ere long overwhelm the rest. There was little need for the admonition not to 'forget the love of strangers.'[9] To entertain them was not merely a virtue; in the Hellenist dispersion it was a religious necessity. And by such means not a few whom they would regard as 'heavenly messengers' might be welcomed. From the Acts of the Apostles we knew with what eagerness they would receive, and with what readiness they would invite, the passing Rabbi or teacher, who came from the home of their faith, to speak, if there were in them a word of comforting exhortation for the people. [10] We can scarcely doubt, considering the state of things, that this often bore on 'the consolation of Israel.' But, indeed, all that came from Jerusalem, all that helped them to realise their living connection with it, or bound it more closely, was precious. 'Letters out of Judæa,' the tidings which some one might bring on his return from festive pilgrimage or business journey, especially about anything connected with that grand expectation - the star which was to rise on the Eastern sky - would soon spread, till the Jewish pedlar in his wanderings had carried the news to the most distant and isolated Jewish home, where he might find a Sabbath, welcome and Sabbath-rest.

Such undoubtedly was the case. And yet, when the Jew stepped out of the narrow circle which he had drawn around him, he was confronted on every side by Grecianism. It was in the forum, in the market, in the counting house, in the street; in all that he saw, and in all to whom he spoke. It was refined; it was elegant; it was profound; it was supremely attractive. He might resist, but he could not push it aside. Even in resisting, he had already yielded to it. For, once open the door to the questions which it brought, if it were only to expel, or repel them, he must give up that principle of simple authority on which traditionalism as a system rested. Hellenic criticism could not so be silenced, nor its searching light be extinguished by the breath of a Rabbi. If he attempted this, the truth would not only be worsted before its enemies, but suffer detriment in his own eyes. He must meet argument with argument, and that not only for those who were without, but in order to be himself quite sure of what he believed. He must be able to hold it, not only in controversy with others, where pride might bid him stand fast, but in that much more serious contest within, where a man meets the old adversary alone in the secret arena of his own mind, and has to sustain that terrible hand-to-hand fight, in which he is uncheered by outward help. But why *should* he shrink from the contest, when he was sure that his was Divine truth, and that therefore victory must be on his side? As in our modern conflicts against the onesided inferences from physical investigations we are wont to say that the truths of nature cannot contradict those of revelation, both being of God, and as we are apt to regard as truths of nature what sometimes are only deductions from partially ascertained facts, and as truths of revelation what, after all, may be only our own inferences, sometimes from imperfectly apprehended premises, so the Hellenist would seek to conciliate the truths of Divine revelation with those others which, he thought, he recognized in Hellenism. But what were the truths of Divine revelation? Was it only the substance of Scripture, or also its form, the truth itself which was conveyed, or the manner in which it was presented to the Jews; or, if both, then did the two stand on exactly the same footing? On the answer to these questions would depend how little or how much he would 'hellenise.'

One thing at any rate was quite certain. The Old Testament, leastwise, the Law of Moses, was directly and wholly from God; and if so, then its form also - its letter - must be authentic and authoritative. Thus much on the surface, and for all. But the student must search deeper into it, his senses, as it were, quickened by Greek criticism; he must 'meditate' and penetrate into the Divine mysteries. The Palestinian also searched into them, and the result was the *Midrash*. But, whichever of his methods he had applied - the *Peshat*, or simple criticism of the words, the *Derush*, or search into the possible applications of the text, what might be 'trodden out' of it; or the *Sod*, the hidden, mystical, supranatural bearing of the words - it was still only the *letter* of the text that had been studied. There was, indeed, yet another understanding of the Scriptures, to which St. Paul directed his disciples: the spiritual bearing of its spiritual truths. But that needed another qualification, and tended in another direction from those of which the Jewish student knew. On the other hand, there was the intellectual view of the Scriptures - their philosophical understanding, the application to them of the results of Grecian thought and criticism. It was this which was peculiarly Hellenistic. Apply that method, and the deeper the explorer proceeded in his search, the more would he feel himself alone, far from the outside crowd; but the brighter also would that light of criticism, which he carried, shine in the growing darkness, or, as he held it up, would the precious ore, which he laid bare, glitter and sparkle with a thousand varying hues of brilliancy. What was Jewish, Palestinian, individual, concrete in the Scriptures, was only the outside - true in itself, but not *the* truth. There were depths beneath. Strip these stories of their nationalism; idealise the individual of the persons introduced, and you came upon abstract ideas and realities, true to all time and to all nations. But

[9] φιλοξεῖα, Hebr. xiii. 2.
[10] λόγος παρακλήσεως πρὸς τὸν λαόν, Acts xiii. 15.

this deep symbolism was Pythagorean; this pre-existence of ideas which were the types of all outward actuality, was Platonism! Broken rays in them, but the focus of truth in the Scriptures. Yet these were rays, and could only have come from the Sun. All truth was of God; hence theirs must have been of that origin. Then were the sages of the heathen also in a sense God-taught - and God-teaching, or inspiration, was rather a question of degree than of kind!

One step only remained; and that, as we imagine, if not the easiest, yet, as we reflect upon it, that which in practice would be most readily taken. It was simply to advance towards Grecianism; frankly to recognise truth in the results of Greek thought. There is that within us, name it mental consciousness, or as you will, which, all unbidden, rises to answer to the voice of intellectual truth, come whence it may, just as conscience answers to the cause of moral truth or duty. But in this case there was more. There was the mighty spell which Greek philosophy exercised on all kindred minds, and the special adaptation of the Jewish intellect to such subtle, if not deep, thinking. And, in general, and more powerful than the rest, because penetrating everywhere, was the charm of Greek literature, with its brilliancy; of Greek civilisation and culture, with their polish and attractiveness; and of what, in one word, we may call the 'time-spirit,' that *tyrannos*, who rules all in their thinking, speaking, doing, whether they list or not.

Why, his sway extended even to Palestine itself, and was felt in the innermost circle of the most exclusive Rabbinism. We are not here referring to the fact that the very language spoken in Palestine came to be very largely charged with Greek, and even Latin, words Hebraised, since this is easily accounted for by the new circumstances, and the necessities of intercourse with the dominant or resident foreigners. Nor is it requisite to point out how impossible it would have been, in presence of so many from the Greek and Roman world, and after the long and persistent struggle of their rulers to Grecianise Palestine, nay, even in view of so many magnificent heathen temples on the very soil of Palestine, to exclude all knowledge of, or contact with Grecianism. But not to be able to exclude was to have in sight the dazzle of that unknown, which as such, and in itself, must have had peculiar attractions to the Jewish mind. It needed stern principle to repress the curiosity thus awakened. When a young Rabbi, *Ben Dama*, asked his uncle whether he might not study Greek philosophy, since he had mastered the 'Law' in every aspect of it, the older Rabbi replied by a reference to Josh. i. 8: 'Go and search what is the hour which is neither of the day nor of the night, and in it thou mayest study Greek philosophy.'[11] Yet even the Jewish patriarch, Gamaliel II., who may have sat with Saul of Tarsus at the feet of his grandfather, was said to have busied himself with Greek, as he certainly held liberal views on many points connected with Grecianism. To be sure, tradition justified him on the ground that his position brought him into contact with the ruling powers, and, perhaps, to further vindicate him, ascribed similar pursuits to the elder Gamaliel, although groundlessly, to judge from the circumstance that he was so impressed even with the wrong of possessing a Targum on Job in Aramæan, that he had it buried deep in the ground.

But all these are indications of a tendency existing. How wide it must have spread, appears from the fact that the ban had to be pronounced on all who studied 'Greek wisdom.' One of the greatest Rabbis, Elisha ben Abujah, seems to have been actually led to apostacy by such studies. True, he appears as the '*Acher*' - the 'other' - in Talmudic writings, whom it was not proper even to name. But he was not yet an apostate from the Synagogue when those 'Greek songs' ever flowed from his lips; and it was in the very Beth-ha-Midrash, or theological academy, that a multitude of *Siphrey Minim* (heretical books) flew from his breast, where they had lain concealed.[12] It may be so, that the expression '*Siphrey Homeros*' (Homeric writings), which occur not only in the Talmud[13] but even in the Mishnah[14] referred pre-eminently, if not exclusively, to the religious or semi-religious Jewish Hellenistic literature, outside even the Apocrypha.[15] But its occurrence proves, at any rate, that the Hellenists were credited with the study of Greek literature, and that through them, if not more directly, the Palestinians had become acquainted with it.

This sketch will prepare us for a rapid survey of that Hellenistic literature which Judæa so much dreaded. Its importance, not only to the Hellenists but to the world at large, can scarcely be over-estimated. First and foremost, we have here the Greek translation of the Old Testament, venerable not only as the oldest, but as that which at the time of Jesus held

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[11] Men. 99 *b*, towards the end.

[12] Jer. Chag. ii. 1; comp. Chag. 15.

[13] Jer. Sanh. x. 28 *a*.

[14] Yad. iv. 6.

[15] Through this literature, which as being Jewish might have passed unsuspected, a dangerous acquaintance might have been introduced with Greek writings - the more readily, that for example Aristobulus described Homer and Hesiod as having 'drawn from our books' (ap. *Euseb*. Praepar. Evang. xiii. 12). According to *Hamburger* (Real-Encykl. für Bibel u. Talmud, vol. ii. pp. 68, 69), the expression *Siphrey Homeros* applies exclusively to the Judæo-Alexandrian heretical writings; according to *Fürst* (Kanon d. A. Test. p. 98), simply to Homeric literature. But see the discussion in *Levy*, Neuhebr. u. Chald. Wörterb., vol. i. p. 476 *a* and *b*.

the place of our 'Authorized Version,' and as such is so often, although freely, quoted, in the New Testament. Nor need we wonder that it should have been the people's Bible, not merely among the Hellenists, but in Galilee, and even in Judæa. It was not only, as already explained, that Hebrew was no longer the 'vulgar tongue' in Palestine, and that written Targumim were prohibited. But most, if not all - at least in towns - would understand the Greek version; it might be quoted in intercourse with Hellenist brethren or with the Gentiles; and, what was perhaps equally, if not more important, it was the most readily procurable. From the extreme labour and care bestowed on them, Hebrew manuscripts of the Bible were enormously dear, as we infer from a curious Talmudical notice,[16] where a common wollen wrap, which of course was very cheap, a copy of the Psalms, of Job, and torn pieces from Proverbs, are together valued at five *maneh* - say, about 19*l*. Although this notice dates from the third or fourth century, it is not likely that the cost of Hebrew Biblical MSS. was much lower at the time of Jesus. This would, of course, put their possession well nigh out of common reach. On the other hand, we are able to form an idea of the cheapness of Greek manuscripts from what we know of the price of books in Rome at the beginning of our era. Hundreds of slaves were there engaged copying what one dictated. The result was not only the publication of as large editions as in our days, but their production at only about double the cost of what are now known as 'cheap' or 'people's editions.' Probably it would be safe to compute, that as much matter as would cover sixteen pages of small print might, in such cases, be sold at the rate of about sixpence, and in that ratio.[17] Accordingly, manuscripts in Greek or Latin, although often incorrect, must have been easily attainable, and this would have considerable influence on making the Greek version of the Old Testament the 'people's Bible.'[18]

The Greek version, like the Targum of the Palestinians, originated, no doubt, in the first place, in a felt national want on the part of the Hellenists, who as a body were ignorant of Hebrew. Hence we find notices of very early Greek versions of at least parts of the Pentateuch.[19] But this, of course, could not suffice. On the other hand, there existed, as we may suppose, a natural curiosity on the part of students, especially in Alexandria, which had so large a Jewish population, to know the sacred books on which the religion and history of Israel were founded. Even more than this, we must take into account the literary tastes of the first three Ptolemies (successors in Egypt of Alexander the Great), and the exceptional favour which the Jews for a time enjoyed. Ptolemy I. (Lagi) was a great patron of learning. He projected the Museum in Alexandria, which was a home for literature and study, and founded the great library. In these undertakings Demetrius Phalereus was his chief adviser. The tastes of the first Ptolemy were inherited by his son, Ptolemy II. (Philadelphus), who had for two years been co-regent.[20] In fact, ultimately that monarch became literally book-mad, and the sums spent on rare MSS., which too often proved spurious, almost pass belief. The same may be said of the third of these monarchs, Ptolemy III. (Euergetes). It would have been strange, indeed, if these monarchs had not sought to enrich their library with an authentic rendering of the Jewish sacred books, or not encouraged such a translation.

These circumstances will account for the different elements which we can trace in the Greek version of the Old Testament, and explain the historical, or rather legendary, notices which we have of its composition. To begin with the latter. Josephus has preserved what, no doubt in its present form, is a spurious letter from one Aristeas to his brother Philocrates,[21] in which we are told how, by the advice of his librarian (?), Demetrius Phalereus, Ptolemy II. had sent by him (Aristeas) and another officer, a letter, with rich presents, to Eleazar, the High-Priest at Jerusalem; who in turn had selected seventy-two translators (six out of each tribe), and furnished them with a most valuable manuscript of the Old Testament. The letter then gives further details of their splendid reception at the Egyptian court, and of their sojourn in the island of Pharos, where they accomplished their work in seventy-two days, when they returned to Jerusalem laden with rich presents, their translation having received the formal approval of the Jewish Sanhedrin at Alexandria. From this account we may at least derive as

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[16] Gitt. 35 last line and *b*.

[17] Comp. *Friedländer*, Sitteng. Roms, vol. iii. p. 315.

[18] To these causes there should perhaps be added the attempt to introduce Grecianism by force into Palestine, the consequences which it may have left, and the existence of a Grecian party in the land.

[19] *Aristobulus* in Euseb. Præpar. Evang. ix. 6; xiii. 12. The doubts raised by *Hody* against this testimony have been generally repudiated by critics since the treatise by *Valkenaer* (Diatr. de Aristob. Jud. appended to *Gaisford's* ed. of the Præpar. Evang.).

[20] 286-284 B.C.

[21] Comp. Josephi Opera, ed. Havercamp, vol. ii. App. pp. 103-132. The best and most critical edition of this letter by Prof. *M. Schmidt*, in Merx' Archiv. i. pp. 252-310. The story is found in *Jos*. Ant. xii. 2. 2; Ag. Ap. ii. 4; *Philo*, de Vita Mosis, lib. ii. section 5-7. The extracts are most fully given in *Euseb*. Præpar. Evang. Some of the Fathers give the story, with additional embellishments. It was first critically called in question by *Hody* (Contra Historiam Aristeæ de L. X. interpret. dissert. Oxon. 1685), and has since been generally regarded as legendary. But its foundation in fact has of late been recognized by well nigh all critics, though the letter itself is pseudonymic, and full of fabulous details.

historical these facts: that the Pentateuch - for to it only the testimony refers - was translated into Greek, at the suggestion of Demetrius Phalareus, in the reign and under the patronage - if not by direction - of Ptolemy II. (Philadelphus).[22] With this the Jewish accounts agree, which describe the translation of the Pentateuch under Ptolemy - the Jerusalem Talmud[23] in a simpler narrative, the Babylonian[24] with additions apparently derived from the Alexandrian legends; the former expressly noting thirteen, the latter marking fifteen, variations from the original text.[25]

The Pentateuch once translated, whether by one, or more likely by several persons,[26] the other books of the Old Testament would naturally soon receive the same treatment. They were evidently rendered by a number of persons, who possessed very different qualifications for their work - the translation of the Book of Daniel having been so defective, that in its place another by Theodotion was afterwards substituted. The version, as a whole, bears the name of the LXX. - as some have supposed from the number of its translators according to Aristeas' account - only that in that case it should have been seventy-two; or from the approval of the Alexandrian Sannedrin[27] - although in that case it should have been seventy-one; or perhaps because, in the popular idea, the number of the Gentile nations, of which the Greek (Japheth) was regarded as typical, was seventy. We have, however, one fixed date by which to compute the completion of this translation. From the prologue to the Apocryphal 'Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach,' we learn that in his days the Canon of Scripture was closed; and that on his arrival, in his thirty-eighth year.[28] In Egypt, which was then under the rule of Euergetes, he found the so-called LXX. version completed, when he set himself to a similar translation of the Hebrew work of his grandfather. But in the 50th chapter of that work we have a description of the High-Priest Simon, which is evidently written by an eye-witness. We have therefore as one term the pontificate of Simon, during which the earlier Jesus lived; and as the other, the reign of Euergetes, in which the grandson was at Alexandria. Now, although there were two High-Priests who bore the name Simon, and two Egyptian kings with the surname Euergetes, yet on purely historical grounds, and apart from critical prejudices, we conclude that the Simon of Ecclus. L. was Simon I., the Just, one of the greatest names in Jewish traditional history; and similarly, that the Euergetes of the younger Jesus was the first of that name, Ptolemy III., who reigned from 247 to 221 B.C. [29] In his reign, therefore, we must regard the LXX. version as, at least substantially, completed.

From this it would, of course, follow that the Canon of the Old Testament was then practically fixed in Palestine.[30] That Canon was accepted by the Alexandrian translators, although the more loose views of the Hellenists on 'inspiration,' and the absence of that close watchfulness exercised over the text in Palestine, led to additions and alterations, and ultimately even to the admission of the Apocrypha into the Greek Bible. Unlike the Hebrew arrangement of the tex into the Law, the Prophets,[31] and the (sacred) Writings, or Hagiographa, the LXX. arrange them into historical, prophetical, and poetic books, and count twenty-two, after the Hebrew alphabet, instead of twenty-four, as the Hebrews. But perhaps both these may have been later arrangements, since Philo evidently knew the Jewish order of the books.[32] What text the translators may have

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[22] This is also otherwise attested. See *Keil*, Lehrb. d. hist. kr. Einl. d. A. T., p. 551, note 5.
[23] Meg. i.
[24] Meg. 9 *a*.
[25] It is scarcely worth while to refute the view of Tychsen, *Jost* (Gesch. d. Judenth.), and others, that the Jewish writers only wrote down for Ptolemy the Hebrew words in Greek letters. But the word {hebrew} cannot possibly bear that meaning in this connection. Comp. also *Frankel*, Vorstudien, p. 31.
[26] According to Sopher. i. 8, by five persons, but that seems a round number to correspond to the five books of Moses. *Frankel* (Ueber d. Einfl. d. paläst. Exeg.) labours, however, to show in detail the differences between the different translators. But his criticism is often strained, and the solution of the question is apparently impossible.
[27] *Böhl* would have it, 'the Jerusalem Sanhedrin!'
[28] But the expression has also been referred to the thirty-eighth year of the reign of *Euergetes*.
[29] To my mind, at least, the historical evidence, apart from critical considerations, seems very strong. Modern writers on the other side have confessedly been influenced by the consideration that the earlier date of the Book of Sirach would also involve a much earlier date for the close of the O. T. Canon than they are disposed to admit. More especially would it bear on the question of the so-called 'Maccabean Psalms,' and the authorship and date of the Book of Daniel. But historical questions should be treated independently of critical prejudices. *Winer* (Bibl. Realwörterb. i. p. 555), and others after him admit that the Simon of Ecclus. ch. L. was indeed Simon the Just (i.), but maintain that the Euergetes of the Prologue was the second of that name, Ptolemy VII., popularly nicknamed Kakergetes. Comp. the remarks of *Fritzsche* on this view in the Kurzgef. Exeg. Handb. z. d. Apokr. 5te Lief. p. xvii.
[30] Comp. here, besides the passages quoted in the previous note, Baba B. 13 *b* and 14 *b*; for the cessation of revelation in the Maccabean period, 1 Macc. iv. 46; ix. 27; xiv. 41; and, in general, for the Jewish view on the subject at the time of Christ, *Jos*. Ag. Ap. i. 8.
[31] *Anterior*: Josh., Judg., 1 and 2 Sam. 1 and 2 Kings. *Posterior*: Major: Is., Jer., and Ezek.; and the Minor Prophets.
[32] De Vita Contempl. § 3.

used we can only conjecture. It differs in almost innumerable instances from our own, though the more important deviations are comparatively few.[33] In the great majority of the lesser variations our Hebrew must be regarded as the correct text.[34]

Putting aside clerical mistakes and misreadings, and making allowance for errors of translation, ignorance, and haste, we note certain outstanding facts as characteristic of the Greek version. It bears evident marks of its origin in Egypt in its use of Egyptian words and references, and equally evident traces of its Jewish composition. By the side of slavish and false literalism there is great liberty, if not licence, in handling the original; gross mistakes occur along with happy renderings of very difficult passages, suggesting the aid of some able scholars. Distinct Jewish elements are undeniably there, which can only be explained by reference to Jewish tradition, although they are much fewer than some critics have supposed.[35] This we can easily understand, since only those traditions would find a place which at that early time were not only received, but in general circulation. The distinctively Grecian elements, however, are at present of chief interest to us. They consist of allusions to Greek mythological terms, and adaptations of Greek philosophical ideas. However few,[36] even one well-authenticated instance would lead us to suspect others, and in general give to the version the character of Jewish Hellenising. In the same class we reckon what constitutes the prominent characteristic of the LXX. version, which, for want of better terms, we would designate as rationalistic and apologetic. Difficulties - or what seemed such - are removed by the most bold methods, and by free handling of the text; it need scarcely be said, often very unsatisfactorily. More especially a strenuous effort is made to banish all anthropomorphisms, as inconsistent with their ideas of the Deity. The superficial observer might be tempted to regard this as not strictly Hellenistic, since the same may be noted, and indeed is much more consistently carried out, in the Targum of Onkelos. Perhaps such alterations had even been introduced into the Hebrew text itself.[37] But there is this vital difference between Palestinianism and Alexandrianism, that, broadly speaking, the Hebrew avoidance of anthropomorphisms depends on objective - theological and dogmatic - the Hellenistic on subjective - philosophical and apologetic - grounds. The Hebrew avoids them as he does what seems to him inconsistent with the dignity of Biblical heroes and of Israel. 'Great is the power of the prophets,' he writes, 'who liken the Creator to the creature;' or else[38] 'a thing is written only to break it to the ear' - to adapt it to our human modes of speaking and understanding; and again,[39] the 'words of the Torah are like the speech of the children of men.' But for this very purpose the words of Scripture may be presented in another form, if need be even modified, so as to obviate possible misunderstanding, or dogmatic error. The Alexandrians arrived at the same conclusion, but from an opposite direction. They had not theological but philosophical axioms in their minds - truths which the *highest* truth could not, and, as they held, did not contravene. Only dig deeper; get beyond the letter to that to which it pointed; divest abstract truth of its concrete, national, Judaistic envelope - penetrate through the dim porch into the temple, and you were surrounded by a blaze of light, of which, as its portals had been thrown open, single rays had fallen into the night of heathendom. And so the truth would appear glorious - more than vindicated in their own sight, triumphant in that of others!

In such manner the LXX. version became really the people's Bible to that large Jewish world through which Christianity was afterwards to address itself to mankind. It was part of the case, that this translation should be regarded by

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[33] They occur chiefly in 1 Kings, the books of Esther, Job, Proverbs, Jeremiah, and Daniel. In the Pentateuch we find them only in four passages in the Book of Exodus.

[34] There is also a curious correspondence between the Samaritan version of the Pentateuch and that of the LXX., which in no less than about 2,000 passages agree as against our Hebrew, although in other instances the Greek text either agrees with the Hebrew against the Samaritan, or else is independent of both. On the connection between Samaritan literature and Hellenism there are some very interesting notices in *Freudenthal*, Hell. Stud. pp. 82-103, 130-136, 186, &c.

[35] The extravagant computations in this respect of *Frankel* (both in his work, Ueber d. Einfl. d. Paläst. Exeg., and also in the Vorstud. z. Sept. pp. 189-191) have been rectified by *Herzfeld* (Gesch. d. Vol. Isr. vol. iii.), who, perhaps, goes to the other extreme. Herzfeld (pp. 548-550) admits - and even this with hesitation - of only six distinct references to Halakhoth in the following passages in the LXX.: Gen. ix. 4; xxxii. 32; Lev. xix. 19; xxiv. 7; Deut. xxv. 5; xxvi. 12. As instances of Haggadah we may mention the renderings in Gen. v. 24 and Ex. x. 23.

[36] *Dähne* and *Gfrörer* have in this respect gone to the same extreme as *Frankel* on the Jewish side. But even *Siegfried* (Philo v. Alex. p. 8) is obliged to admit that the LXX. rendering, δγ ν ρατος κα κατασκεαστος Gen. i. 2), bears undeniable mark of Grecian philosophic views. And certainly this is not the sole instance of the kind.

[37] As in the so-called '*Tiqquney Sopherim*,' or 'emendations of the scribes.' Comp. here generally the investigations of *Geiger* (Urschrift u. Ueberse z. d. Bibel). But these, however learned and ingenious, require, like so many of the dicta of modern Jewish criticism, to be taken with the utmost caution, and in each case subjected to fresh examination, since so large a proportion of their writings are what is best designated by the German *Tendenz-Schriften*, and their inferences *Tendenz-Schlüsse*. But the critic and the historian should have no *Tendenz* - except towards simple fact and historical truth.

[38] Mechilta on Ex. xix.

[39] Ber. 31 *b*.

the Hellenists as inspired like the original. Otherwise it would have been impossible to make final appeal to the very words of the Greek; still less, to find in them a mystical and allegorical meaning. Only that we must not regard their views of inspiration - except as applying to Moses, and even there only partially - as identical with ours. To their minds inspiration differed quantitatively, not qualitatively, from what the rapt soul might at any time experience, so that even heathen philosophers might ultimately be regarded as at times inspired. So far as the version of the Bible was concerned (and probably on like grounds), similar views obtained at a later period even in Hebrew circles, where it was laid down that the Chaldee Targum on the Pentateuch had been originally spoken to Moses on Sinai,[40] though afterwards forgotten, till restored and re-introduced.[41]

Whether or not the LXX. was read in the Hellenist Synagogues, and the worship conducted, wholly or partly, in Greek, must be matter of conjecture. We find, however, a significant notice[42] to the effect that among those who spoke a barbarous language (not Hebrew - the term referring specially to Greek), it was the custom for one person to read the whole *Parashah* (or lesson for the day), while among the Hebrew-speaking Jews this was done by seven persons, successively called up. This seems to imply that either the Greek text alone was read, or that it followed a Hebrew reading, like the Targum of the Easterns. More probably, however, the former would be the case, since both Hebrew manuscripts, and persons qualified to read them, would be difficult to procure. At any rate, we know that the Greek Scriptures were authoritatively acknowledged in Palestine,[43] and that the ordinary daily prayers might be said in Greek.[44] The LXX. deserved this distinction from its general faithfulness - at least, in regard to the Pentateuch - and from its preservation of ancient doctrine. Thus, without further referring to its full acknowledgment of the doctrine of Angels (comp. Deut. xxxii. 8, xxxiii. 2), we specially mark that is preserved the Messianic interpretation of Gen. xlix. 10, and Numb. xxiv. 7, 17, 23, bringing us evidence of what had been the generally received view two and a half centuries before the birth of Jesus. It must have been on the ground of the use made of the LXX. in argument, that later voices in the Synagogue declared this version to have been as great calamity to Israel as the making of the golden calf,[45] and that is completion had been followed by the terrible omen of an eclipse, that lasted three days.[46] For the Rabbis declared that upon investigation it had been found that the Torah could be adequately translated only into Greek, and they are most extravagant in their praise of the Greek version of *Akylas*, or Aquila, the proselyte, which was made to counteract the influence of the LXX.[47] But in Egypt the anniversary of the completion of the LXX. was celebrated by a feast in the island of Pharos, in which ultimately even heathens seem to have taken part.[48]

## 8. W Nelte Frank W. Nelte The Septuagint Version (LXX) of the Old Testament

(Edited and additional quotations supplied in December 2003)

Over the years I have heard many claims made for the LXX translation of the Old Testament. It is claimed by some people that the LXX is a superior version to the Hebrew language Masoretic Text of the Old Testament.

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[40] Ned. 37 *b*; Kidd. 49 *a*.
[41] Meg. 3 *a*.
[42] Jer. Meg. iv. 3, ed. Krot. p. 75*a*.
[43] Meg. i. 8. It is, however, fair to confess strong doubt, on my part, whether this passage may not refer to the Greek translation of *Akylas*. At the same time it simply speaks of a translation into Greek. And before the version of Aquila the LXX. alone held that place. It is one of the most daring modern Jewish perversions of history to identify this Akylas, who flourished about 130 after Christ, with the Aquila of the Book of Acts. It wants even the excuse of a colourable perversion of the confused story about Akylas, which *Epiphanius* who is so generally inaccurate, gives in De Pond. et Mensur. c. xiv.
[44] The 'Shema' (Jewish creed), with its collects, the eighteen 'benedictions,' and 'the grace at meat.' A later Rabbi vindicated the use of the 'Shema' in Greek by the argument that the word *Shema* meant not only 'Hear,' but also 'understand' (Jer. Sotah vii. 1.) Comp. sotah vii. 1, 2. In Ber. 40 *b*, it is said that the Parashah connected with the woman suspected of adultery, the prayer and confession at the bringing of the tithes, and the various benedictions over food, may be said not only in Hebrew, but in any other languages.
[45] Mass. Sopher i. Hal. 7 - at the close of vol. ix. of the Bab.Talmud.
[46] Hilch. Ged. Taan.
[47] Jer. Meg. i. 11, ed. Krot. p. 71 *b* and *c*.
[48] Philo, Vita Mos. ii. ed. Francf. p. 660.

Such claims are usually intended to confer a certain amount of authority to the Greek language LXX translation of the Old Testament. Taken to its logical conclusion, the inference is made that this Greek translation of the Old Testament is actually BETTER THAN THE ORIGINAL IN THE HEBREW LANGUAGE!

It should be immediately apparent to anyone that any translation into any language can NEVER be "better" than the version God originally inspired in the Hebrew language. WHY would God possibly have inspired the whole Old Testament in the Hebrew language, if God somehow felt that A GREEK TRANSLATION from this original Hebrew text is actually "better than the original"?

Didn't God in Old Testament times use the Hebrew words He WANTED to use? Does the Greek translation of the Old Testament somehow express God's feelings BETTER than God was able to do when He inspired those thoughts in the Hebrew language?

A translation from the original text CANNOT possibly be better than the original. In those places where the translation differs from the original, the original text must always be given priority.

Anyway, let's examine the facts regarding the LXX translation of the Old Testament.

## QUOTATIONS FROM THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA

The following quotations are from the 1958 edition, Volume 20, Article "SEPTUAGINT, THE", from pages 335 - 336. The emphasis in all of the following quotations is mine.

"Its (i.e. the LXX) critical value is unfortunately greatly impaired by THE CORRUPT STATE OF ITS OWN TEXT."

"The Hebrew text from which the LXX translators worked was often divergent from that represented by the Masoretic text, but we need not assume that in cases of difference the Greek is to be preferred. THE LXX TRANSLATORS MADE SOME PALPABLE MISTAKES; THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF HEBREW WAS OFTEN INADEQUATE; THEY OCCASIONALLY INTERPRETED AS WELL AS TRANSLATED, AND THEY SOMETIMES INTRODUCED LOCAL COLOUR."

These quotations show that the LXX is totally corrupt and unreliable!

Here are some more facts paraphrased from the Britannica article:

1) The LXX does not follow the Hebrew tripartite division but changes the order of the books to the categories of Law, History, Poetry and Prophecy.

2) The chief uncial Mss (i.e. written on parchment in semi-capital style letter, which were used for the N.T. till about 800 A.D. and of which about 300 exist today) are "A" and "B", both of Egyptian origin and yet they "vary considerably" from each other. "A" is Codex Alexandrinus and "B" is Codex Vaticanus. Both contain most of the O.T. and N.T. and their O.T. text is the LXX text.

3) The original LXX text of the Book of Job was very much shorter than the Hebrew text ... the translator left large portions out!

4) In the books of Esther and Daniel the LXX has NUMEROUS ADDITIONS, which are not found in the Hebrew text. Who authorised these additions?

5) The LXX frequently changes the order of the text, especially in Jeremiah chapters 25 - 51. That sounds just like Moffatt's English translation, doesn't it?

6) The two chief LXX mss of the book of Judges vary very much from each other. Which one is to be trusted?

7) There is no authentic LXX version available today ... ANYWHERE! That is, if there ever was such a thing as an "authentic" LXX version.

8) Today's LXX actually has Theodotion's translation of the book of Daniel in it. Why did the original translation of the book of Daniel have to be dropped? Theodotion, a Hellenistic Jewish scholar made his translation around 180 - 190 A.D. That's about 400 years after the LXX translation was supposedly made.

9) The LXX text of Jeremiah very clearly has two different authors. The first author translated chapters 1 - 28; the rest was done by a different person.

10) The LXX text preserves several non-canonical books, known as apocryphal books. On what authority are such books included with the Word of God?

These facts, which can be verified in the Britannica, again make the point that there is nothing inspired about the LXX translation, and that it is a poor quality rendition of the Hebrew scriptures.

## THE LETTER OF ARISTEAS

THE ONLY "EVIDENCE" that such a "Septuagint" translation was ever made is based on a pseudepigraphical document entitled "LETTER OF ARISTEAS TO PHILOCRATES". "Pseudepigraphical" means: ascribing false names of authors to works! Scholars today very readily recognize that this letter was not written by anyone named "ARISTEAS" at all! This forgery was made for the express purpose of deceiving people about the exact origin of the Greek translations of the Hebrew scriptures that were extant at the time this pseudepigraphical letter was written.

Here is a quotation about this letter from the 2003 Encyclopedia Britannica (CD ROM version):

This is from the section "Biblical Literature, Old Testament canon, texts and versions:

"The Septuagint (LXX)

The story of the Greek translation of the Pentateuch is told in the Letter of Aristeas, which purports to be a contemporary document written by Aristeas, a Greek official at the Egyptian court of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–246 BCE). It recounts how the law of the Jews was translated into Greek by Jewish scholars sent from Jerusalem at the request of the king.

THIS NARRATIVE, repeated in one form or another by Philo and rabbinic sources, is FULL OF INACCURACIES THAT PROVE THAT THE AUTHOR WAS AN ALEXANDRIAN JEW WRITING WELL AFTER THE EVENTS HE DESCRIBED HAD TAKEN PLACE. The Septuagint Pentateuch, which is all that is discussed, does, however, constitute an independent corpus within the Greek Bible, and it was probably first translated as a unit by a company of scholars in Alexandria about the middle of the 3rd century BCE.

The Septuagint, as the entire Greek Bible came to be called, has a long and complex history and took well over a century to be completed. It is for this reason NOT A UNIFIED OR CONSISTENT TRANSLATION." [end of quotation] (my emphasis)

In another section, titled "Intertestamental literature, The Pseudepigraphal writings, Works indicating a Greek influence", the 2003 Britannica states:

"The Letter of Aristeas

An important document of Jewish Hellenistic literature is The Letter of Aristeas, a pseudepigraphon ascribed to Aristeas, an official of Ptolemy II Philadelphus, a Greek monarch of Egypt in the 3rd century BCE. The letter is addressed to his brother and gives an account of the translation of the Pentateuch (first five books of the Old Testament) into Greek, by order of Ptolemy. According to the legend, reflected in the letter, the translation was made by 72 elders, brought from Jerusalem, in 72 days. THE LETTER, IN REALITY WRITTEN BY AN ALEXANDRIAN JEW ABOUT 100 BCE, attempts to show the superiority of Judaism both as religion and as philosophy. It also contains interesting descriptions of Palestine, of Jerusalem with its Temple, and of the royal gifts to the Temple." [end of quotation] (my emphasis)

This "letter of Aristeas" is a forgery, written by a Jew who pretended to be a Greek living more than 100 years earlier. And THAT is the only so-called "evidence" that a Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Old Testament was ever made!

THERE IS NO OTHER EVIDENCE OF ANY KIND THAT SUCH AN LXX TRANSLATION WAS EVER MADE!

Think about this for a moment! Why would God inspire the gospel writers to quote from a translation whose only claim to existence rested on a forged letter, rather than quoting from the Hebrew text God had inspired in the first place?

The exact date of this "Letter of Aristeas" stands in question. The "earliest possible date" has been placed at about 150 B.C. ... or 130 years AFTER the LXX was supposedly made! However, some scholars feel, not without reason, that the true author was PHILO, a Jew who was born in Alexandria about 20 B.C. and who died around 50 A.D. If Philo was the author, then this "Letter of Aristeas" would in fact have an A.D. date.

Philo, though ethnically a Jew, was philosophically a Greek. He was a prolific author. He strongly believed in an allegorical interpretation of the Old Testament. His aim was to prove that the philosophy of the Greeks had in fact been anticipated by the Jews. This way he could justify the Jews embracing Hellenistic customs and ideas. Philo was also heavily influenced by a belief in mysticism. He tried very hard to synthesize the Hellenistic and the Hebrew traditions. And Philo certainly had a motive for WANTING to see the Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures find acceptance.

Whether Philo was the author of "Aristeas" or not does not affect the conclusion that this letter has been proved to be a forgery!

Another problem is that the originally forged "Letter of Aristeas" doesn't exist any more ... and so different writers, CLAIMING to quote from this letter, have recorded different versions of this story. And so "the only REAL evidence" for the existence of an LXX doesn't actually exist!

Now it is not a question that some of the books of the Old Testament were translated into Greek perhaps around 200 B.C. or even earlier. But it is also known that other books were only translated 100 years or more later. And the point is that the LXX is presented as "a package"; some of its books may be reasonably acceptable translations, while at the same time other books are of a totally unacceptable quality. Therefore we have no option but to reject the package as a whole, as far as any inspiration is concerned.

THE ONLY REAL VALUE of the LXX is of a historical nature. There are many questionable translations of words and of phrases in our English language Bibles. In many cases such inaccuracies can be traced back first to Jerome's Latin Vulgate translation, and then even further to the Greek text of the LXX. Thus it is quite helpful to have access to the LXX, because it shows us by what avenue a large number of mistranslations entered into our English language Bibles. It is well-known that many translators of the Bible have relied heavily on both, the Latin Vulgate and the Greek LXX, to produce their translations. So the LXX, while certainly not inspired, and while it is in many cases a very careless and poor quality translation of the Hebrew scriptures, is nevertheless a very important document for biblical research purposes.

But let's continue.

## ORIGEN'S HEXAPLA

Is there ANY Greek manuscript of the O.T. written before the time of Christ? Yes, there is ONE and one only ... it is a minute scrap dated at 150 B.C. . That is about 130 years after the supposed LXX translation was made and therefore obviously not the work of the "72 scholars".

It is the Rylands Papyrus #458 and it is in the John Rylands Library in Manchester, U.K. It contains Deuteronomy chapters 23 to 28 ... no more! That is hardly convincing evidence that the whole Pentateuch had supposedly been translated 130 years earlier.

When challenged to produce HARD EVIDENCE for the existence of such a document as the LXX, scholars can only point to Origen's "HEXAPLA". Today there is no copy of Origen's ORIGINAL Hexapla in existence ... we only have the words of other authors who refer to it.

Here is a quotation from the 2003 Encyclopedia Britannica, CD ROM edition, from the article

"Hexapla".

"Hexapla":

(Greek: “Sixfold”), edition of the Old Testament compiled by Origen ofAlexandria in Caesarea, Palestine, before AD 245. The Hexapla presented for comparison the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, the Hebrew text in Greek characters, and the Greek versions of Aquila, Symmachus, the Septuagint, and Theodotian in six parallel columns. For some books, including the Psalms, Origen presented as many as three additional Greek texts from unknown sources. In the column devoted to the Septuagint version, he indicated by the use of critical symbols the variations that occurred in Hebrew and Greek renditions.

The entire work took 20 years to complete and may have filled 7,000 pages. It was available in Caesarea until about 600 and was consulted by many scholars, including Jerome in preparing for his Vulgate translation. THE FATE OF THE GREAT WORK IS NOT KNOWN, but it survives in fragments

copied in old manuscripts, in quotations in the works of various Church Fathers, and in several editions of ITS SEPTUAGINT COLUMN — which, because scribes often copied the critical marks incorrectly or left them out, INTRODUCED SOME CONFUSION INTO THE TEXT OF THE SEPTUAGINT. [end of quotation] (my emphasis)

## Let's summarize the available information.

Origen wrote his Hexapla about 500 years after the LXX was supposedly translated! That is a long time, longer than from the time of the 1611 KJV translation to our time today.

Origen was born around 185 A.D. in Alexandria and he became one of the foremost "theologians" of the early Catholic Church. When one examines his works entitled "DE PRINCIPIIS" and "CONTRA CELSUM", then it quickly becomes evident that he tried very hard to reconcile GREEK philosophy with Christian theology ... very much like what Philo had tried to do with the Hebrew scriptures 200 years earlier.

By 220 A.D. there were a number of rather divergent Greek MSS of the Hebrew scriptures around, especially so in Alexandria. Many were extremely poor and slipshod renditions, yet claiming to be the LXX ... making a mockery of the meticulous care the Sopherim had taken in preserving the original text.

As a Catholic theologian, Origen wanted to reconcile these various translations. As a Greek philosopher, Origen wanted these Greek MSS to reflect Greek thought and to at the same time have official Church recognition. He wanted that official recognition to be bestowed on HIS work.

The second column of his Hexapla was supposed to represent the LXX-translation. This was the column that Origen wanted to see receiving official recognition. It is this column that the later Catholic scholar Jerome, the translator of the Latin Vulgate version, viewed as the authoritative standard and which is reflected in his "Vulgate" version. This shows that Origen achieved his goal of receiving official recognition for his version of the LXX.

Now let's look at the second column of Origen's Hexapla, which Origen wanted to present as the official copy of the LXX. As I will show, in reality this presents nothing more than ORIGEN'S OWN ATTEMPT AT PRODUCING A GREEK VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT FOR WHICH HE WANTED OFFICIAL CHURCH RECOGNITION!

### ORIGEN'S VERSION OF THE LXX

What is today accepted as the text of the LXX is nothing more than the text of the LXX Origen presented in his Hexapla. The LXX we have today does not go back to before the time of Origen.

Let me illustrate this by means of a comparison to our English language translations.

Consider the following:

When the 1611 KJV translators used the word "CONVERSATION" they meant: CONDUCT and behaviour. We today have no difficulty recognizing the word "conversation", but to us it means: talking, SPEECH.

In the course of the past 300 years the English word "conversation" has changed its meaning from "conduct and behaviour" to mean "speech and talking".

NOW, if someone today wanted to forge a document that was supposedly written in 1611 A.D. and in it he used the word "conversation" to mean "speech" because he was unaware of the fact that in 1611 this word had a different meaning ... then scholars of the English language would have no difficulty in seeing that this was a forgery.

Do you follow? Using a word in a historical context in which the word had a different meaning is a dead give-away that the document is a forgery, pretending to have been written much earlier.

## THE SAME IS TRUE IN THE GREEK LANGUAGE!

There are similar differences between the classical Greek idiom, which was still in use in 285 B.C., and the Greek of the New Testament and of Origen's time. Scholars of the Greek language can recognize when a word is used with a meaning ahead of its historic place in the language.

## NOW ...

The Greek employed in Origen's LXX is NOT the classical idiom which was still in vogue in 280 B.C., or even in 200 B.C.. Instead, Origen's LXX uses the "Koine" Greek of the New Testament period.

Using the Koine Greek in the text of the supposed LXX translation is exactly like using the word "conversation" with its modern meaning of "speech", but in a document pretending to have been written in 1611 A.D..

Scholars readily recognize this anomaly!

This anomaly is a clear and irrefutable give-away that Origen's LXX did not originate anywhere near 280 B.C.. And that is why many scholars, who themselves refuse to acknowledge this LXX text as being a fraud, prefer to say things like:

"the Greek idiom of the LXX 'ANTICIPATED' that of the New Testament."

What do you mean ... "anticipated"? That sounds just like Philo who felt that the Jews had "anticipated" the philosophy of the Greeks. Look, the man, whose word we are supposed to accept as truth when he says that the second column in his Hexapla represents the official LXX, lived in 220 A.D. and he wrote the LXX in the language of his own time. The only LXX that exists today goes back to Origen. There is no other LXX version apart from Origen!

## SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF GREEK WORDS USED IN THE LXX

Let's examine some of the Greek words that Origen used in the text of his LXX, but which were not used in the classical Greek of the time when the LXX was supposedly translated. This is like using the word "conversation" in the text of the KJV, but to mean "speech".

Technically, scholars will refer to such words as " LATE words", meaning they weren't part of classical Greek. It is the appearance of these words in Origen's LXX text that prompts scholars to make statements like: "the Greek idiom of the LXX ANTICIPATED that of the N.T.".

Here are some examples:

MEGALOSUNE: this is a late word from "MEGAS" and is used in the N.T. in Hebrews 1:3 in the expression "of the Majesty on high" (Greek is "tes megalosunes en hupselois"). It is also used in Hebrews 8:1, etc.. It means "majesty". In the LXX it is used in Deuteronomy 32:3 and in 2 Samuel 7:23. It is NOT FOUND IN GREEK BEFORE CHRIST EXCEPT IN TWO PLACES:

- the Letter of Aristeas (there we have it again, the forgery); and in

- the LXX (Deuteronomy 32:3; 2 Samuel 7:23).

THIS WORD WAS NOT USED IN THE GREEK OF 250 B.C.!

AKATASTATOS: this means "unstable" and is used in James 1:8. This is a LATE DOUBLE COMPOUND from "alpha privative" + "katastatos", which comes from "kathistemi". The LXX uses this word in Isaiah 54:11.

THIS WORD WAS ALSO NOT USED IN THE GREEK OF 250 B.C.!

EMPAIZO is another LATE word found in the LXX. This verb is used in Matthew 28:19, and the noun "empaigmos" formed from this verb means "mocking" and is used in Hebrews 11:36

in the expression "empaigmon kai mastigon" (i.e. "mockings and scourgings"). In the LXX this late verb empaizo is used in Scriptures like Genesis 39:14; Nahum 2:3; Psalm 104:26 (which in the KJV is Psalm 103:26); etc..

THIS WORD WAS ALSO NOT USED IN THE GREEK OF 250 B.C.!

AKROGONIAIOS is a compound word that occurs only in the N.T. and in the LXX. In the New Testament it is used in Ephesians 2:20 in the expression "ontos akrogonianiou autou Christou Iesou" (i.e. "Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone"). It is also used in 1 Peter 2:6. In the LXX Origen first used this word in Isaiah 28:16.

THIS WORD WAS ALSO NOT USED IN THE GREEK OF 250 B.C.!

PAREPIDEMOIS means "strangers" and is used in 1 Peter 1:1. It is a LATE double compound adjective found twice in the LXX (e.g. Genesis 23:4), but not in classical Greek.

THIS WORD WAS ALSO NOT USED IN THE GREEK OF 250 B.C.!

SUNANTILAMBANOMAI is a LATE and striking double compound, used in Romans 8:26 in the expression "sunantilambanetai te astheneia hemon" (i.e. "helps our infirmities"). It is found in the LXX in Exodus 18:22, etc., in Josephus (who wrote in the first century A.D.) and in Diodorus Siculus (who wrote up to 20 B.C.). But it wasn't used before Diodorus.

THIS WORD WAS ALSO NOT USED IN THE GREEK OF 250 B.C.!

SUNEGERTHETE is used in Colossians 2:12 in the expression "en ho kai sunegerthete" (i.e. "wherein also you are risen with him") and it is the first aorist passive indicative of "sunegeiro". This is a LATE

and rare verb used in the LXX in Isaiah 14:9, and otherwise by Plutarch (he lived from 46 - 120 A.D.). Plutarch used it with the meaning of "waking up together".

THIS WORD WAS ALSO NOT USED IN THE GREEK OF 250 B.C.!

MOICHALIS means an adulteress and is used in Romans 7:3. It is another LATE word, found in the LXX in Ezekiel 23:45, Hosea 3:1, etc., and in Plutarch's writings.

THIS WORD WAS ALSO NOT USED IN THE GREEK OF 250 B.C.!

TE MATAIOTETI is used in Romans 8:20 (i.e. "subject to vanity") in the dative case. It is a rare and LATE word from "mataios" meaning "empty, vain", but it is common in the LXX in places like 1 Kings 16:13, etc..

THIS WORD WAS ALSO NOT USED IN THE GREEK OF 250 B.C.!

EDOLIOUSAN ("they have used deceit" in Romans 3:13) is the imperfect active of "dolioo", which comes from the common adjective "dolios" meaning "deceitful". This word is only used here in the N.T. and otherwise only in the LXX as far as B.C. writings are concerned. In the LXX it is used in Proverbs 20:23, etc..

THIS WORD WAS ALSO NOT USED IN THE GREEK OF 250 B.C.!

There are many, many more examples of words like these, which are not really found in the Greek of 200 B.C. or earlier; yet they are used in the LXX, which supposedly reflects the Greek of 280 B.C.. But they ARE found in the Koine Greek of the New Testament. So when Origen included words like these with their New Testament meanings in his text of the LXX, it shows that he could, at the very least, not have been copying a text that predated 100 B.C.. At worst, Origen himself was composing or editing the Greek text he included in his LXX column. Either way, the conclusion must be that the LXX is simply not a reliable translation of the Hebrew scriptures.

One other point about the LXX is worth noting.

## THE "HYPOSTASIS" TEACHING IN THE LXX

Origen is the father of the Catholic teaching about the nature of God, which is expressed by the word "hypostasis", or "hupostasis" in Greek. While this teaching is not a major concern for us one way or the other, it is interesting to observe what Origen did. And this is also clear evidence that Origen did at the very least EDIT AND ALTER the Greek text of the LXX that was available to him.

So note carefully:

Origen wanted to make sure that his "hypostasis-theory" about the nature of God would be accepted as biblical. And so he made very sure that it is included in the Old Testament. In fact, Origen made SO SURE of including this teaching in the Greek LXX text of the Old Testament, that he ...

## TRANSLATED FIFTEEN DIFFERENT HEBREW WORDS WITH THE ONE GREEK WORD "HYPOSTASIS"!

That was Origen's way of making sure that the idea of "hypostasis" would become well entrenched in the Old Testament!

Now think about this for a moment!

The architect of the Catholic teaching about the "hypostasis" of God is also the same man to whom can be traced the only extant version of the Greek LXX translation. And the only extant Greek LXX translation just happens to have rendered FIFTEEN DIFFERENT HEBREW WORDS into the ONE Greek word "hypostasis". Does Hebrew REALLY have "15 different ways" of saying "hypostasis"?

This all by itself reveals the fraud that Origen tried to pass off as a version produced 500 years before his own time! The fact that he then also used numerous LATE Greek words in the text of his LXX column only further cements this conclusion.

In the New Testament the word "hypostasis" is used exactly FIVE times in two epistles, both written by Paul. But in the LXX of the Old Testament it is so common that it represents 15 different Hebrew words. The fraud involved here should be obvious to anyone whose mind is open to the truth.

No wonder scholars of biblical Greek have to say things like "the Greek idiom of the LXX anticipated that of the N.T.".

## ORIGEN'S SHENANIGANS

Now let's examine some of the things Origen did in producing his version of the LXX. Origen wanted to ensure official acceptance of this LXX text. And so the best way to achieve this was for him to create the impression that the New Testament writers were actually quoting from his LXX text rather than from the original Hebrew text. So Origen simply "back-translated" quotations found in the New Testament into his LXX text of the Old Testament. IF people could then be persuaded to view this LXX text as being OLDER than the books of the New Testament, THEN people would be forced to accept that New Testament writers like Paul simply must have used the LXX translation for the quotations they presented.

The fact that Paul in his past training had been "a Pharisee of the Pharisees", meaning that Paul possessed the highest possible qualifications in his knowledge of the Hebrew language, and that as a Pharisee he had basically learned the entire Old Testament off by heart IN THE HEBREW LANGUAGE, is conveniently ignored by that line of reasoning. Why would Paul, who had spent YEARS diligently studying the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, possibly want to quote a corrupt Greek translation of a text he himself knew off by heart in Hebrew?

While Paul certainly was fluent in Greek, he was at the same time AN AUTHORITY ON THE HEBREW LANGUAGE! Paul knew full well that God had originally inspired His Word to be written in Hebrew, and not in Greek. And Paul translated whatever quotations he needed from the Hebrew text himself. And because he had God's Spirit, and because God was inspiring Paul to write a part of what would become the Word of God, therefore Paul at times translated into Greek A SPECIFIC APPLICATION of a Scripture he was quoting, to fit into the context he was writing about.

When God inspired an Old Testament passage to be quoted in the New Testament, then God did not always inspire the Greek text to have the identical meaning to the original Hebrew text. At times the original text has been adapted, under inspiration, to the N.T. conditions. The point is: sometimes God has chosen not to repeat an O.T. quote identically in the N.T., but to ADD to the meaning already provided in the O.T..

This is precisely the same thing which we see when prophecies are repeated. For example, when God made promises to Abraham, with each subsequent reiteration of the promises, they were expanded in some way, rather than the identical statement being repeated all the time.

Let's get back to Origen.

When Origen, in the process of putting together his version of the LXX, came to an O.T. passage that he knew is quoted in the N.T., he simply wrote the Greek text from the New Testament into the Greek LXX in his Hexapla. In plain English, he made the Greek version of his O.T. quote the Greek of the N.T. verbatim. This was to give greater credibility to his work. That way it would look as if the New Testament writers were quoting from his LXX text, that HIS LXX text was therefore "the originally inspired translation" by the 72 scholars from all 12 tribes of Israel.

## HOWEVER, IN THIS PROCESS ORIGEN ALSO MADE SOME SLIP-UPS.

Notice an example:

Here is Hebrews 1:10-12 in the KJV:

And, Thou, LORD, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. (Hebrews 1:10-12)

This is quoted from Psalm 102:25-27:

Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens [are] the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: But thou [art] the same, and thy years shall have no end. (Psalm 102:25-27)

When you compare these two passages, then you see that they are basically the same, except that in Hebrews 1:10 Paul added the word "Lord" to this quotation. The Greek for "Lord" in this verse is "Kurie".

There is nothing unusual in the fact that Paul added this form of address to his quotation. Paul was quoting from the middle of a psalm. When you read the whole psalm, you see that it is speaking about "the LORD", because verse 1 opens with the statement: "Hear my prayer O LORD ...". So the "you" in Psalm 102:25, which Paul is quoting in Hebrews 1:10, is obviously speaking about "the LORD"! But in quoting this verse out of context it was appropriate for Paul to identify who the "you" is speaking about. THEREFORE Paul added the word "LORD". This addition simply clarified the context of the quotation he was presenting. With his addition Paul is conveying THE CORRECT MEANING more accurately.

However ...

Origen in his zeal to copy the Greek New Testament quotation of the O.T. back into his version of the LXX Old Testament also copied the word "Lord" into Psalm 102:25 (which in the LXX is equal to Psalm 101:26).

Now there is no way that those fictitious 72 scholars could have faithfully translated Psalm 102 into Greek and somehow "known" that they should ADD the word "Lord" to verse 25, because Paul would later quote that specific verse OUT OF CONTEXT in a letter to the Hebrews.

Understand something very clearly!

Psalm 102:26 reads:"They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed". Now had Paul ONLY QUOTED VERSE 26, do you know what Paul would have quoted? That should be obvious! Had Paul ONLY quoted verse 26, THEN he would have quoted it as:

"They shall perish, but you, LORD, shall endure: yes, all of them ..."!

Isn't that obvious? Paul simply would have had to do that in order to identify who the "you" is speaking about! And IF Paul had only quoted verse 26 out of context here in Hebrews chapter 1, you know what the Greek text of the LXX would read?? That should also be obvious! The LXX would likewise read:

"They shall perish, but you, LORD, shall endure: yes, all of them ..."!

Similarly, Psalm 102:27 reads: "But thou [art] the same, and thy years shall have no end". Now had Paul ONLY QUOTED VERSE 27, do you know what Paul would have quoted? It should be equally obvious! Had Paul quoted ONLY verse 27, THEN he would have quoted it as:

"But you, LORD, are the same, and your years shall have no end"!

Isn't that also obvious? Paul again simply would have had to do that in order to identify who the "you" is speaking about! And IF Paul had only quoted verse 27 out of context here in Hebrews chapter 1, you know what the Greek text of the LXX would read?? That should again be obvious! The LXX would likewise read:

"But you, LORD, are the same, and your years shall have no end"!

But because Paul did NOT quote Psalm 102, verses 26 or 27 on their own, therefore Origen also had no need to add the word "LORD" to either verse 26 or verse 27. And so the LXX also does not contain the word "LORD" in those two verses.

In Hebrews 1:10 there is a very specific and easily identifiable reason for why Paul added the word "LORD". But back in Psalm 102:25 there is no more reason to include the word "LORD" in verse 25 than there is a need to include the word "LORD" in verses 26 or 27.

What Psalm 102 in the LXX version shows very plainly is that the writer (i.e. Origen) simply COPIED the text from Hebrews 1:10-12 back into his version of the LXX (the only version of the LXX in existence today!) into Psalm 102.

THE FORGERY STANDS EXPOSED!

ONE MORE EXAMPLE

Now let's look at one more example, which is found in Hebrews 1:6.

And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. (Hebrews 1:6)

This is NOT a direct quote from any passage in the O.T., though it is, IN SUBSTANCE, found in Psalm 97:7, which reads:

Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: WORSHIP HIM, ALL [YE] GODS. (Psalm 97:7)

The Hebrew word for "gods" in this verse is "ELOHIM". Now let's examine Psalm 97 more closely and understand what Paul was doing in Hebrews 1:6.

The subject of Psalm 97 is stated in verse 1:

The LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad [thereof]. (Psalms 97:1)

It is Christ RULING ON EARTH, i.e. after His second coming.

Christ's second coming is described in some detail in verses 2-5:

Clouds and darkness [are] round about him: righteousness and judgment [are] the habitation of his throne. A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about. His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. (Psalm 97:2-5)

These are some of the events surrounding the second coming.

Verse 6 tells us that all those who have lived through those end-time events and are still physical, mortal human beings will see the glory of Christ's second coming.

The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory. (Psalm 97:6)

Verse 7 tells us two things:

- all those who had been involved in ANY false religion will be "confounded" (i.e. confused and brought to ruin);

- those who have been changed into spirit beings at that very time (i.e. all those in the first resurrection) are then no longer human beings. They are then "ELOHIM", a part of the Family of God, also called SONS (and DAUGHTERS) OF GOD. These "Elohim" will at that time also worship Jesus Christ. God the Father will not be present here on earth at that occasion, and EVERY ELOHIM in that first resurrection will, without any contradiction, look to Jesus Christ for leadership, for instruction, for guidance and direction and for making known the will of God the Father.

There is nothing unusual about those in the first resurrection "worshipping" Jesus Christ. We will worship God the Father and Jesus Christ for all future eternity! Worship is simply a form of showing very great respect. Even when there are only spirit beings in existence, God the Father and Jesus Christ will both have THRONES in the New Jerusalem!

And there shall be no more curse: but THE THRONE OF GOD AND OF THE LAMB shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: (Revelation 22:3)

And they will be worshipped by all of the rest of their Family! They, together, worked out this plan to create others like themselves and to share their existence with us, and we will for all future eternity express our gratitude and appreciation for what both, God the Father and Jesus Christ, have done for us!

Verse 8 tells of the rejoicing at Christ's second coming.

Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O LORD. (Psalm 97:8)

Verse 9 is speaking TO JESUS CHRIST and says:

For thou, LORD, [art] high above all the earth: THOU ART EXALTED FAR ABOVE ALL GODS. (Psalm 97:9)

Certainly, God the Father has, without contradiction, exalted Jesus Christ "far above" all those in the first resurrection! It is not a matter of Jesus Christ being exalted above "idols" ... those stupid things don't exist in the first place, except as the figment of someone's imagination! To be exalted "above" some non-existent idol is not really any exaltation at all.

Nor is this speaking about Jesus Christ being exalted above some "human judges" (as some would like to see the word "Elohim" translated here). For Jesus Christ, in the glory of His second coming, to be exalted above some dumb, frail, sickly, weak, powerless and helpless "human judges" is not any real exaltation either!

In these verses Christ's glory and power and might at His second coming, when "the hills melted like wax", is not being compared to either some idol or to some human judges (if there are any left alive at that point in time?).

What Christ is exalted above is EVERY OTHER SPIRIT BEING (obviously apart from the Father), both the Elohim in the first resurrection, and the angels of God. That is real exaltation for Jesus Christ, but to be exalted above some fat buddha-idol (or similar caricatures of the image of God) or some human beings (be they judges or kings or business tycoons) is no exaltation for the glorious Jesus Christ!

Now back to the Apostle Paul and Hebrews 1:6.

Paul understood that Psalm 97 makes clear that all those in the first resurrection will worship Jesus Christ. Paul then made a deduction! That's right, HE REASONED! And he reasoned correctly!

He reasoned that Psalm 97:7 OBVIOUSLY implied that if the "Elohim" in the first resurrection will worship Jesus Christ, THEN all the angels, who are lower, will certainly ALSO worship Jesus Christ. And that was SOUND REASONING!

Now Paul's whole point in Hebrews chapter 1 was to demonstrate that Jesus Christ is far greater than any of the angels. In subsequent chapters Paul shows that Christ is also greater than Aaron, as far as being a priest is concerned, and He is greater than Moses, as far as being a lawgiver is concerned. In

other words, Paul is in Hebrews showing the Jews in the Church that Jesus Christ is greater than ANYONE the Jews could possibly think of as being great, except for God the Father Himself.

So in the context of Hebrews chapter 1 Paul was comparing Christ to angels. And in this context Paul made A SPECIFIC APPLICATION of Psalm 87:7 to his context. So Paul wrote Hebrews 1:6 as:

And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, HE SAITH, And let all THE ANGELS OF GOD worship him. (Hebrews 1:6)

Next, notice that Paul wrote: "He saith ...". Paul did not claim that he was giving a direct quote of something that had been "WRITTEN" anywhere in the Old Testament. Paul simply claimed that God had "said" this. Now with Paul basically knowing the whole Old Testament off by heart, IF Paul thought he was actually QUOTING verbatim a statement from the text of the Old Testament, THEN Paul would have written in Hebrews 1:6: "And again, concerning God bringing the firstbegotten into the world, IT IS WRITTEN ..."!

The expression "it is written" occurs 63 times in the whole New Testament. Of those, this expression is used by Paul in his letters 32 times. In the Book of Hebrews Paul only uses this expression in Hebrews 10:7. The point is this: when Paul knew he was quoting an Old Testament scripture directly, then he pointed this out very clearly, as is evident from the 32 times Paul used this expression. So WHY did Paul say in Hebrews 1:6 that "God SAID ...", rather than saying "it is written"?

The answer is that Paul knew quite clearly that he was NOT quoting any scripture directly; he was simply applying sound principles to make this statement. It is very clear that all the angels will worship Jesus Christ.

But what does all this have to do with the LXX, you might be thinking. Well, here's the point:

Paul was not quoting precisely any specific O.T. scripture and did not claim to be quoting anything that was "written". But Origen, in putting his LXX together, decided that Hebrews 1:6 should be found somewhere in the O.T..

And so Origen inserted "and let all the angels of God worship him" into his LXX text of the Old Testament! He put this sentence into the text of DEUTERONOMY 32:43. Notice what Deuteronomy 32:43 actually says:

Rejoice, O ye nations, [with] his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, [and] to his people. (Deuteronomy 32:43)

Here is the text of the English Translation of the LXX:

Rejoice, ye heavens, with him, AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM; rejoice ye Gentiles, with his people, and let all the sons of God strengthen themselves in him; for he will avenge the blood of his sons, and he will render vengeance, and recompense justice to his enemies, and will reward them that hate him; and the Lord shall purge the land of his people. (Deuteronomy 32:43 LXXE)

So in the LXX it says: "... and let all the angels of God worship him", the exact Greek words found in Hebrews 1:6.

Now here is the point:

These are the last words of a song that Moses is speaking to Israel (see the next verse, Deuteronomy 32:44). Now THE CONTEXT makes quite clear that this expression "and let all the angels of God worship him" is TOTALLY OUT OF PLACE!!

Here is the context of this verse:

Verse 39:

See now that I, *even* I, *am* he, and *there is* no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither *is there any* that can deliver out of my hand. (Deuteronomy 32:39 AV)

God is here speaking about His power and His control over human beings.

Verse 40:

For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever. (Deuteronomy 32:40 AV)

God lives for ever and is in full control.

Verse 41:

If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me. (Deuteronomy 32:41 AV)

God is speaking about punishing human nations that disobey Him.

Verse 42:

I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; *and that* with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy. (Deuteronomy 32:42 AV)

God is speaking about punishing flesh and blood human beings who fight against Him.

Now verse 43:

Rejoice, O ye nations, *with* his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, *and* to his people. (Deuteronomy 32:43 AV)

This verse continues the theme of the previous two verses, with God punishing His enemies.

Now verse 44:

And Moses came and spake all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he, and Hoshea the son of Nun. (Deuteronomy 32:44 AV)

This verse very clearly concludes this context.

So note very carefully: "and let all the angels of God worship him" simply does NOT fit into this context for TWO reasons!

1) This reference to "angels" has nothing to do with this context whatsoever!! The statement simply does not make any sense in this context! The clear subject matter of this context is GOD TAKING VENGEANCE on His enemies. The subject matter is NOT about those who "worship God"! Worshipping God doesn't feature in this context! Such a reference is out of place, and would only be inserted into this context by some fool who didn't grasp God's purpose for the statements God was making in this context!

2) Secondly, all of the statements in this whole section are in THE ACTIVE VOICE! Did you notice this? But the statement "let all the angels of God worship him" is in THE PASSIVE VOICE! It is totally out of step with the rest of this whole section. WHY would God possibly switch to the passive voice for this statement in this context?

Furthermore, there is no way that the person who wrote the text of Deuteronomy 32:43 for the Greek LXX version could possibly have gotten that expression "and let all the angels of God worship him" from ANY Hebrew manuscript of the Book of Deuteronomy! There isn't any Hebrew manuscript with this expression in it!

### SO ONCE AGAIN ORIGEN'S FORGERY STANDS EXPOSED!

In summary, yes there were Greek translations of the O.T. around in Alexandria. The prologue to Ecclesiasticus, one of the apocryphal books, mentions that by about 130 B.C. portions of the third section of the O.T. (the Writings or the Psalms) were available in Greek. The Law and then the Prophets had been translated earlier. Many of these were private ventures and of very poor quality. By 40 A.D. Philo was familiar with all of the O.T. books in Greek, except for Esther, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon and Daniel. As likely as not, he was the one who authored the "Letter of Aristeas" in order to give recognition and approval to these Greek translations. But note that even as late as 40 A.D. four books of the Old Testament were STILL not yet available to Philo in the Greek language. That's about 300 years after the LXX translation was supposedly made.

So the only LXX we have today stands exposed as a corrupt forgery! It has considerable HISTORICAL value (i.e. to trace how various wrong ideas found general acceptance), but NO THEOLOGICAL VALUE AT ALL!

## 9. Wikipedia – Septuagint

# Septuagint

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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*This article is about the Greek Bible translation. For the number, see 70 (number). For the moth, see Septuaginta zagulajevi. For other uses, see Septuagint (disambiguation).*

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## Septuagint

Fragment of a Septuagint: A column of uncial book from 1 Esdras in the *Codex Vaticanus* c. 325–350 CE, the basis

| | |
|---|---|
| of Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton's Greek edition and English translation | |
| **Also known as** | LXX<br>Greek Old Testament |
| **Date** | c. 3rd century BCE |
| **Language(s)** | Koine Greek |

Part of a series on

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The **Greek Old Testament**, or **Septuagint** (/ˈsɛptjuədʒɪnt/,[1] US also /sɛpˈtjuːədʒɪnt/;[2] from the Latin: *septuaginta*, lit. 'seventy'; often abbreviated *70*; in Roman numerals, **LXX**), is the earliest extant Koine Greek translation of books from the Hebrew Bible, various biblical apocrypha, and deuterocanonical books.[3] The first five books of the Hebrew Bible, known as the Torah or the Pentateuch, were translated in the mid-3rd century BCE; they did not survive as original-translation texts, however, except as rare fragments.[4] The remaining books of the Greek Old Testament are presumably translations of the 2nd century BCE.[5][6][7]

The full title (Ancient Greek: Ἡ μετάφρασις τῶν Ἑβδομήκοντα, lit. 'The Translation of the Seventy') derives from the story recorded in the Letter of Aristeas that the Hebrew Torah was translated into Greek at the request of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–247 BCE) by 70 Jewish scholars or, according to later tradition, 72: six scholars from each of the Twelve Tribes of Israel, who independently produced identical translations. The miraculous character of the Aristeas legend might indicate the esteem and disdain in which the translation was held at the time; Greek translations of Hebrew scriptures were in circulation among the Alexandrian Jews.[8] Egyptian papyri from the period have led most scholars to view as probable Aristeas's dating of the translation of the Pentateuch to the third century BCE. Whatever share the Ptolemaic court may have had in the translation, it satisfied a need felt by the Jewish community (in whom the knowledge of Hebrew was waning among the demands of every-day life).[9]

Greek scriptures were in wide use by the time of Jesus and Paul of Tarsus (early Christianity) because most Christian proselytes, God-fearers, and other gentile sympathizers of Hellenistic Judaism could not read Hebrew. The text of the Greek Old Testament is quoted more often than the original Hebrew Bible text in the Greek New Testament[10][4] (particularly the Pauline epistles)[11] by the Apostolic Fathers, and later by the Greek Church Fathers. Modern critical editions of the Greek Old Testament are based on the Codices Alexandrinus, Sinaiticus, and Vaticanus. The fourth- and fifth-century Greek Old Testament manuscripts have different lengths. The Codex Alexandrinus, for example, contains all four books of the Maccabees; the Codex Sinaiticus contains 1 and 4 Maccabees, and the Codex Vaticanus contains none of the four books.

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# Names[edit]

"Septuagint" is derived from the Latin phrase *versio septuaginta interpretum* ("translation of the seventy interpreters"), which was derived from the Ancient Greek: Ἡ μετάφρασις τῶν Ἑβδομήκοντα, romanized: *hē metáphrasis tōn hebdomḗkonta*, lit. 'The Translation of the Seventy'.[12] It was not until the time of Augustine of Hippo (354–430 CE) that the Greek translation of the Jewish scriptures was called by the Latin term *Septuaginta*.[13] The Roman numeral LXX (seventy) is commonly used as an abbreviation, in addition to [14] or *G*.

# Composition[edit]

## Jewish legend[edit]

Beginning of the Letter of Aristeas to Philocrates (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 11th century)

According to the legend, seventy-two Jewish scholars were asked by Ptolemy II Philadelphus, the Greek king of Egypt, to translate the Torah from Biblical Hebrew to Greek for inclusion in the Library of Alexandria.[15] This narrative is found in the pseudepigraphic Letter of Aristeas to his brother Philocrates,[16] and is repeated by Philo of Alexandria, Josephus (in *Antiquities of the Jews*),[17] and by later sources (including Augustine of Hippo).[18] It is also found in the Tractate Megillah of the Babylonian Talmud:

King Ptolemy once gathered 72 Elders. He placed them in 72 chambers, each of them in a separate one, without revealing to them why they were summoned. He entered each one's room and said: "Write for me the Torah of Moshe, your teacher". God put it in the heart of each one to translate identically as all the others did.[19]

Philo of Alexandria, who relied extensively on the Septuagint,[4][*better source needed*] writes that the number of scholars was chosen by selecting six scholars from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. According to later rabbinic tradition (which considered the Greek translation as a distortion of sacred text and unsuitable for use in the synagogue), the Septuagint was given to Ptolemy two days before the annual Tenth of Tevet fast.[4][20]

## History[edit]

The 3rd century BCE is supported for the Torah translation by a number of factors, including its Greek being representative of early Koine Greek, citations beginning as early as the 2nd century BCE, and early manuscripts datable to the 2nd century.[21] After the Torah, other books were translated over the next two to three centuries. It is unclear which was translated when, or where; some may have been translated twice (into different versions), and then revised.[22] The quality and style of the translators varied considerably from book to book, from a literal translation to paraphrasing to an interpretative style.

The translation process of the Septuagint and from the Septuagint into other versions can be divided into several stages: the Greek text was produced within the social environment of Hellenistic Judaism, and completed by 132 BCE. With the spread of Early Christianity, this Septuagint in turn was rendered into Latin in

a variety of versions and the latter, collectively known as the *Vetus Latina*, were also referred to as the Septuagint.[23][24][25] initially in Alexandria but elsewhere as well.[12] The Septuagint also formed the basis for the Slavonic, Syriac, Old Armenian, Old Georgian, and Coptic versions of the Christian Old Testament.[26]

## Language[edit]

The Septuagint is written in Koine Greek. Some sections contain Semiticisms, idioms and phrases based on Semitic languages such as Hebrew and Aramaic.[27] Other books, such as Daniel and Proverbs, have a stronger Greek influence.[15]

The Septuagint may also clarify pronunciation of pre-Masoretic Hebrew; many proper nouns are spelled with Greek vowels in the translation, but contemporary Hebrew texts lacked vowel pointing. However, it is unlikely that all biblical-Hebrew sounds had precise Greek equivalents.[28]

## Canonical differences[edit]

As the translation progressed, the canon of the Greek Bible expanded. The Hebrew Bible, also called the Tanakh, has three parts: the Torah (law), the Nevi'im (prophets), and the Ketuvim (writings). The Septuagint has four: law, history, poetry, and prophets. The books of the Apocrypha were inserted at appropriate locations.[7]

Extant copies (dating from the 4th century CE) of the Septuagint contain books and additions[29] which are not present in the Hebrew Bible (not found in the Palestinian Jewish canon),[30] and are not uniform in their contents. According to some scholars, there is no evidence that the Septuagint included these additional books.[31][32][5] These copies of the Septuagint include books known as *anagignoskomena* in Greek and in English as deuterocanon (derived from the Greek words for "second canon"), books not included in the Jewish canon.[33][34]

These books are estimated to have been written between 200 BCE and 50 CE. Among them are the first two books of Maccabees; Tobit; Judith; the Wisdom of Solomon; Sirach; Baruch (including the Letter of Jeremiah), and additions to Esther and Daniel. The Septuagint version of some books, such as Daniel and Esther, are longer than those in the Masoretic Text.[35] The Septuagint Book of Jeremiah is shorter than the Masoretic Text.[36] The Psalms of Solomon, 3 Maccabees, 4 Maccabees, the Epistle of Jeremiah, the Book of Odes, the Prayer of Manasseh and Psalm 151 are included in some copies of the Septuagint.[37]

Several reasons have been given for the rejection of the Septuagint as scriptural by mainstream rabbinic Judaism since Late Antiquity. Differences between the Hebrew and the Greek were found.[4] The Hebrew source texts in some cases (particularly the Book of Daniel) used for the Septuagint differed from the Masoretic tradition of Hebrew texts, which were affirmed as canonical by the rabbis. The rabbis also wanted to distinguish their tradition from the emerging tradition of Christianity, which frequently used the Septuagint.[4] As a result of these teachings, other translations of the Torah into Koine Greek by early Jewish rabbis have survived only as rare fragments.

The Septuagint became synonymous with the Greek Old Testament, a Christian canon incorporating the books of the Hebrew canon with additional texts. Although the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches include most of the books in the Septuagint in their canons, Protestant churches usually do not. After the Protestant Reformation, many Protestant Bibles began to follow the Jewish canon and exclude the additional texts (which came to be called the Apocrypha) as noncanonical.[38][39][40] The Apocrypha are included under a separate heading in the King James version of the Bible.[41]

| Deuterocanonical and apocryphal books in the Septuagint | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Greek name**[12][42][43] | **Transliteration** | **English name** |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Προσευχὴ Μανασσῆ | Proseuchē Manassē | Prayer of Manasseh |
| Ἔσδρας Αʹ | 1 Esdras | 1 Esdras or 1 Ezra |
| Τωβίτ (called Τωβείτ or Τωβίθ in some sources) | Tōbit (or Tōbeit or Tōbith) | Tobit |
| Ἰουδίθ | Ioudith | Judith |
| Ἐσθήρ | Esthēr | Esther (with additions) |
| Μακκαβαίων Αʹ | 1 Makkabaiōn | 1 Maccabees |
| Μακκαβαίων Βʹ | 2 Makkabaiōn | 2 Maccabees |
| Μακκαβαίων Γʹ | 3 Makkabaiōn | 3 Maccabees |
| Μακκαβαίων Δ' Παράρτημα | 4 Makkabaiōn Parartēma | 4 Maccabees[44] |
| Ψαλμός ΡΝΑʹ | Psalmos 151 | Psalm 151 |
| Σοφία Σαλομῶντος | Sophia Salomōntos | Wisdom or Wisdom of Solomon |
| Σοφία Ἰησοῦ Σειράχ | Sophia Iēsou Seirach | Sirach or Wisdom of Sirach |
| Βαρούχ | Barouch | Baruch |
| Ἐπιστολὴ Ἰερεμίου | Epistolē Ieremiou | Epistle or Letter of Jeremiah |
| Δανιήλ | Daniēl | Daniel (with additions) |
| Ψαλμοί Σαλομῶντος | Psalmoi Salomōntos | Psalms of Solomon[a] |

## Final form[edit]

All the books in Western Old Testament biblical canons are found in the Septuagint, although the order does not always coincide with the Western book order. The Septuagint order is evident in the earliest Christian Bibles, which were written during the fourth century.[15]

Some books which are set apart in the Masoretic Text are grouped together. The Books of Samuel and the Books of Kings are one four-part book entitled Βασιλειῶν (Of Reigns) in the Septuagint. The Books of Chronicles supplement Reigns, known as Παραλειπομένων (Of Things Left Out). The Septuagint organizes the minor prophets in its twelve-part Book of Twelve.[15]

Some ancient scriptures are found in the Septuagint, but not in the Hebrew Bible. The additional books are Tobit; Judith; the Wisdom of Solomon; Wisdom of Jesus son of Sirach; Baruch and the Letter of Jeremiah, which became chapter six of Baruch in the Vulgate; additions to Daniel (The Prayer of Azarias, the Song of the Three Children, Susanna, and Bel and the Dragon); additions to Esther; 1 Maccabees; 2 Maccabees; 3 Maccabees; 4 Maccabees; 1 Esdras; Odes (including the Prayer of Manasseh); the Psalms of Solomon, and Psalm 151.

Fragments of deuterocanonical books in Hebrew are among the Dead Sea Scrolls found at Qumran. Sirach, whose text in Hebrew was already known from the Cairo Geniza, has been found in two scrolls (2QSir or 2Q18, 11QPs_a or 11Q5) in Hebrew. Another Hebrew scroll of Sirach has been found in Masada (MasSir).[46]:597 Five fragments from the Book of Tobit have been found in Qumran: four written in Aramaic and one written in Hebrew (papyri 4Q, nos. 196-200).[46]:636 Psalm 151 appears with a number of canonical and non-canonical psalms in the Dead Sea scroll 11QPs(a) (also known as 11Q5), a first-century-CE scroll discovered in 1956.[47] The scroll contains two short Hebrew psalms, which scholars agree were the basis for Psalm 151.[46]:585–586 The canonical acceptance of these books varies by Christian tradition.

#### Theodotion's translation[edit]

In the most ancient copies of the Bible which contain the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, the Book of Daniel is not the original Septuagint version but a copy of Theodotion's translation from the Hebrew which more closely resembles the Masoretic text. The Septuagint version was discarded in favor of Theodotion's version in the 2nd to 3rd centuries CE. In Greek-speaking areas, this happened near the end of the 2nd century; in Latin-speaking areas (at least in North Africa), it occurred in the middle of the 3rd century. The reason for this is unknown. Several Old Greek texts of the Book of Daniel have been discovered, and the original form of the book is being reconstructed.[15]

## Use[edit]

### Jewish use[edit]

*See also: Development of the Hebrew Bible canon*

The pre-Christian Jews Philo and Josephus considered the Septuagint equal to the Hebrew text.[15][48] Manuscripts of the Septuagint have been found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, and were thought to have been in use among Jews at the time.

Several factors led most Jews to abandon the Septuagint around the second century CE. The earliest gentile Christians used the Septuagint out of necessity, since it was the only Greek version of the Bible and most (if not all) of these early non-Jewish Christians could not read Hebrew. The association of the Septuagint with a rival religion may have made it suspect in the eyes of the newer generation of Jews and Jewish scholars.[26] Jews instead used Hebrew or Aramaic Targum manuscripts later compiled by the Masoretes and authoritative Aramaic translations, such as those of Onkelos and Rabbi Yonathan ben Uziel.[49]

Perhaps most significant for the Septuagint, as distinct from other Greek versions, was that the Septuagint began to lose Jewish sanction after differences between it and contemporary Hebrew scriptures were discovered. Even Greek-speaking Jews tended to prefer other Jewish versions in Greek (such as the translation by Aquila), which seemed to be more concordant with contemporary Hebrew texts.[26]

## Christian use[edit]

*See also: Development of the Old Testament canon*

The Early Christian church used the Greek texts,[4] since Greek was a *lingua franca* of the Roman Empire at the time and the language of the Greco-Roman Church while Aramaic was the language of Syriac Christianity. The relationship between the apostolic use of the Septuagint and the Hebrew texts is complicated. Although the Septuagint seems to have been a major source for the Apostles, it is not the only one. St. Jerome offered, for example, Matthew 2:15 and 2:23, John 19:37, John 7:38, and 1 Corinthians 2:9[50] as examples found in Hebrew texts but not in the Septuagint. Matthew 2:23 is not present in current Masoretic tradition either; according to Jerome, however, it was in Isaiah 11:1. The New Testament writers freely used the Greek translation when citing the Jewish scriptures (or quoting Jesus doing so), implying that Jesus, his apostles, and their followers considered it reliable.[11][27][4]

In the early Christian Church, the presumption that the Septuagint was translated by Jews before the time of Christ and that it lends itself more to a Christological interpretation than 2nd-century Hebrew texts in certain places was taken as evidence that "Jews" had changed the Hebrew text in a way that made it less Christological. Irenaeus writes about Isaiah 7:14 that the Septuagint clearly identifies a "virgin" (Greek *παρθένος*; *bethulah* in Hebrew) who would conceive.[51] The word *almah* in the Hebrew text was, according to Irenaeus, interpreted by Theodotion and Aquila (Jewish converts), as a "young woman" who would conceive. Again according to Irenaeus, the Ebionites used this to claim that Joseph was the biological father of Jesus. To him that was heresy facilitated by late anti-Christian alterations of the scripture in Hebrew, as evident by the older, pre-Christian Septuagint.[52]

Jerome broke with church tradition, translating most of the Old Testament of his Vulgate from Hebrew rather than Greek. His choice was sharply criticized by Augustine, his contemporary.[53] Although Jerome argued for the superiority of the Hebrew texts in correcting the Septuagint on philological and theological grounds, because he was accused of heresy he also acknowledged the Septuagint texts.[54] Acceptance of Jerome's version increased, and it displaced the Septuagint's Old Latin translations.[26]

The Eastern Orthodox Church prefers to use the Septuagint as the basis for translating the Old Testament into other languages, and uses the untranslated Septuagint where Greek is the liturgical language. Critical translations of the Old Testament which use the Masoretic Text as their basis consult the Septuagint and other versions to reconstruct the meaning of the Hebrew text when it is unclear, corrupted, or ambiguous.[26] According to the New Jerusalem Bible foreword, "Only when this (the Masoretic Text) presents insuperable difficulties have emendations or other versions, such as the ... LXX, been used."[55] The translator's preface to the New International Version reads, "The translators also consulted the more important early versions (including) the Septuagint ... Readings from these versions were occasionally followed where the MT seemed doubtful ..."[56]

# Textual history[edit]

| Books | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Greek name**[12][42][b] | **Transliteration** | **English name** |
| **Law** | | |
| Γένεσις | Genesis | Genesis |

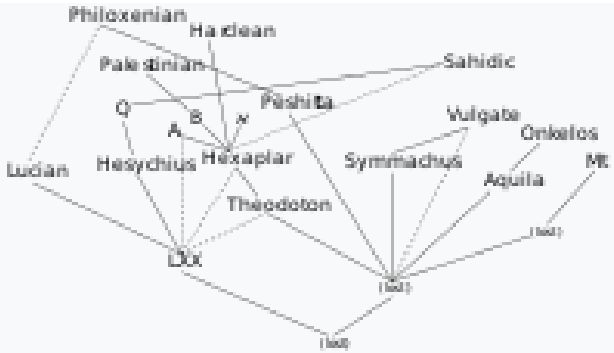
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ἔξοδος | Exodos | Exodus |
| Λευϊτικόν | Leuitikon | Leviticus |
| Ἀριθμοί | Arithmoi | Numbers |
| Δευτερονόμιον | Deuteronomion | Deuteronomy |
| **History** | | |
| Ἰησοῦς Ναυῆ | Iēsous Nauē | Joshua |
| Κριταί | Kritai | Judges |
| Ῥούθ | Routh | Ruth |
| Βασιλειῶν Α′[c] | 1 Basileiōn | Kings I (I Samuel) |
| Βασιλειῶν Β′ | 2 Basileiōn | Kings II (II Samuel) |
| Βασιλειῶν Γ′ | 3 Basileiōn | Kings III (I Kings) |
| Βασιλειῶν Δ′ | 4 Basileiōn | Kings IV (2 Kings) |
| Παραλειπομένων Α′ | 1 Paraleipomenōn[d] | Chronicles I |
| Παραλειπομένων Β′ | 2 Paraleipomenōn | Chronicles II |
| Ἔσδρας Α′ | Esdras A | 1 Esdras |
| Ἔσδρας Β′ | Esdras B | Ezra-Nehemiah |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Τωβίτ[e] | Tōbit[f] | Tobit |
| Ἰουδίθ | Ioudith | Judith |
| Ἐσθήρ | Esthēr | Esther with additions |
| Μακκαβαίων Αʹ | 1 Makkabaiōn | Maccabees I |
| Μακκαβαίων Βʹ | 2 Makkabaiōn | Maccabees II |
| Μακκαβαίων Γʹ | 3 Makkabaiōn | Maccabees III |
| **Wisdom** | | |
| Ψαλμοί | Psalmoi | Psalms |
| Ψαλμός ΡΝΑʹ | Psalmos 151 | Psalm 151 |
| Προσευχὴ Μανασσῆ | Proseuchē Manassē | Prayer of Manasseh |
| Ἰώβ | Iōb | Job |
| Παροιμίαι | Paroimiai | Proverbs |
| Ἐκκλησιαστής | Ekklēsiastēs | Ecclesiastes |
| Ἆσμα Ἀσμάτων | Asma Asmatōn | Song of Songs or Song of Solomon or Canticle of Canticles |
| Σοφία Σαλομῶντος | Sophia Salomōntos | Wisdom or Wisdom of Solomon |
| Σοφία Ἰησοῦ Σειράχ | Sophia Iēsou Seirach | Sirach or Ecclesiasticus |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ψαλμοί Σαλομῶντος | Psalmoi Salomōntos | Psalms of Solomon[a] |
| **Prophets** | | |
| **Δώδεκα** | **Dōdeka** | **Minor Prophets** |
| Ὡσηέ Α′ | I. Hōsēe | Hosea |
| Ἀμώς Β′ | II. Āmōs | Amos |
| Μιχαίας Γ′ | III. Michaias | Micah |
| Ἰωήλ Δ′ | IV. Iōēl | Joel |
| Ὀβδιού Ε′[g] | V. Obdiou | Obadiah |
| Ἰωνᾶς Ϛ' | VI. Iōnas | Jonah |
| Ναούμ Ζ′ | VII. Naoum | Nahum |
| Ἀμβακούμ Η′ | VIII. Ambakoum | Habakkuk |
| Σοφονίας Θ′ | IX. Sophonias | Zephaniah |
| Ἀγγαῖος Ι′ | X. Angaios | Haggai |
| Ζαχαρίας ΙΑ′ | XI. Zacharias | Zachariah |
| Μαλαχίας ΙΒ′ | XII. Malachias | Malachi |
| Ἠσαΐας | Ēsaias | Isaiah |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ἱερεμίας | Hieremias | Jeremiah |
| Βαρούχ | Barouch | Baruch |
| Θρῆνοι | Thrēnoi | Lamentations |
| Ἐπιστολὴ Ἰερεμίου | Epistolē Ieremiou | Letter of Jeremiah |
| Ἰεζεκιήλ | Iezekiēl | Ezekiel |
| Δανιήλ | Daniēl | Daniel with additions |
| **Appendix** | | |
| Μακκαβαίων Δ' Παράρτημα | 4 Makkabaiōn Parartēma | 4 Maccabees[h] |

## Textual analysis[edit]




The inter-relationship between significant ancient Old Testament manuscripts (some identified by their *siglum*). LXX denotes the original Septuagint.

Modern scholarship holds that the Septuagint was written from the 3rd through the 1st centuries BCE, but nearly all attempts at dating specific books (except for the Pentateuch, early- to mid-3rd century BCE) are tentative.[15] Later Jewish revisions and recensions of the Greek against the Hebrew are well-attested. The best-known are Aquila (128 CE), Symmachus, and Theodotion. These three, to varying degrees, are more-literal renderings of their contemporary Hebrew scriptures compared to the Old Greek (the original Septuagint). Modern scholars consider one (or more) of the three to be new Greek versions of the Hebrew Bible.

Although much of Origen's *Hexapla* (a six-version critical edition of the Hebrew Bible) is lost, several compilations of fragments are available. Origen kept a column for the Old Greek (the Septuagint), which included readings from all the Greek versions in a critical apparatus with diacritical marks indicating to which version each line (Gr. στίχος) belonged. Perhaps the *Hexapla* was never copied in its entirety, but Origen's combined text was copied frequently (eventually without the editing marks) and the older uncombined text of

the Septuagint was neglected. The combined text was the first major Christian recension of the Septuagint, often called the *Hexaplar recension*. Two other major recensions were identified in the century following Origen by Jerome, who attributed these to Lucian (the Lucianic, or Antiochene, recension) and Hesychius (the Hesychian, or Alexandrian, recension).[15]

**Manuscripts**[edit]
*Main article: Septuagint manuscripts*

The oldest manuscripts of the Septuagint include 2nd-century-BCE fragments of Leviticus and Deuteronomy (Rahlfs nos. 801, 819, and 957) and 1st-century-BCE fragments of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, and the Twelve Minor Prophets (Alfred Rahlfs nos. 802, 803, 805, 848, 942, and 943). Relatively-complete manuscripts of the Septuagint postdate the Hexaplar recension, and include the fourth-century-CE Codex Vaticanus and the fifth-century Codex Alexandrinus. These are the oldest-surviving nearly-complete manuscripts of the Old Testament in any language; the oldest extant complete Hebrew texts date to about 600 years later, from the first half of the 10th century.[26] The 4th-century Codex Sinaiticus also partially survives, with many Old Testament texts.[26]:73:198 The Jewish (and, later, Christian) revisions and recensions are largely responsible for the divergence of the codices.[15] The Codex Marchalianus is another notable manuscript.

**Differences from the Vulgate and the Masoretic Text**[edit]

The text of the Septuagint is generally close to that of the Masoretes and Vulgate. Genesis 4:1–6 is identical in the Septuagint, Vulgate and the Masoretic Text, and Genesis 4:8 to the end of the chapter is the same. There is only one noticeable difference in that chapter, at 4:7:[*citation needed*]

| **Genesis 4:7, LXX and English Translation (NETS)** | **Genesis 4:7, Masoretic and English Translation from MT (Judaica Press)** | **Genesis 4:7, Latin Vulgate and English Translation (Douay-Rheims)** |
|---|---|---|
| οὐκ ἐὰν ὀρθῶς προσενέγκῃς, ὀρθῶς δὲ μὴ διέλῃς, ἥμαρτες; ἡσύχασον· πρὸς σὲ ἡ ἀποστροφὴ αὐτοῦ, καὶ σὺ ἄρξεις αὐτοῦ. | הֲלוֹא אִם תֵּיטִיב שְׂאֵת וְאִם לֹא תֵיטִיב לַפֶּתַח חַטָּאת רֹבֵץ וְאֵלֶיךָ תְּשׁוּקָתוֹ וְאַתָּה תִּמְשָׁל בּוֹ׃ | *nonne si bene egeris, recipies : sin autem male, statim in foribus peccatum aderit? sed sub te erit appetitus ejus, et tu dominaberis illius.* |
| If you offer correctly but do not divide correctly, have you not sinned? Be still; his recourse is to you, and you will rule over him. | Is it not so that if you improve, it will be forgiven you? If you do not improve, however, at the entrance, sin is lying, and to you is its longing, but you can rule over it. | If thou do well, shalt thou not receive? but if ill, shall not sin forthwith be present at the door? but the lust thereof shall be under thee, and thou shalt have dominion over it. |

The differences between the Septuagint and the MT fall into four categories:[57]

1. *Different Hebrew sources for the MT and the Septuagint*. Evidence of this can be found throughout the Old Testament. A subtle example may be found in Isaiah 36:11; the meaning remains the same, but the choice of words evidences a different text. The MT reads *"...al tedaber yehudit be-'ozne ha`am al ha-homa"* [speak not the Judean language in the ears of (or—which can be heard by) the people on the wall]. The same verse in the Septuagint reads, according to the translation of Brenton: "and speak not to us in the Jewish tongue: and wherefore speakest thou in the ears of the men on the wall." The MT reads "people" where the Septuagint reads "men". This difference is very minor and does not affect the meaning of the verse.[*citation needed*] Scholars had used discrepancies such as this to claim that the Septuagint was a poor translation of the Hebrew original. This verse is found in Qumran (1QIsa*a*), however, where the Hebrew word *"haanashim"* (the men) is found in place of *"haam"* (the people). This discovery, and others like it, showed that even seemingly-minor differences of translation could be the result of variant Hebrew source texts.
2. *Differences in interpretation* stemming from the same Hebrew text. An example is Genesis 4:7, shown above.

3. *Differences as a result of idiomatic translation issues*: A Hebrew idiom may not be easily translated into Greek, and some difference is imparted. In Psalm 47:10, the MT reads: "The shields of the earth belong to God"; the Septuagint reads, "To God are the mighty ones of the earth."
4. *Transmission changes in Hebrew or Greek*: Revision or recension changes and copying errors

**Dead Sea Scrolls**[edit]

The Biblical manuscripts found in Qumran, commonly known as the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), have prompted comparisons of the texts associated with the Hebrew Bible (including the Septuagint).[58] Emanuel Tov, editor of the translated scrolls,[59] identifies five broad variants of DSS texts:[60]

1. Proto-Masoretic: A stable text and numerous, distinct agreements with the Masoretic Text. About 60 percent of the Biblical scrolls (including 1QIsa-b) are in this category.
2. Pre-Septuagint: Manuscripts which have distinctive affinities with the Greek Bible. About five percent of the Biblical scrolls, they include 4QDeut-q, 4QSam-a, 4QJer-b, and 4QJer-d. In addition to these manuscripts, several others share similarities with the Septuagint but do not fall into this category.
3. The Qumran "Living Bible": Manuscripts which, according to Tov, were copied in accordance with the "Qumran practice": distinctive, long orthography and morphology, frequent errors and corrections, and a free approach to the text. They make up about 20 percent of the Biblical corpus, including the Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa-a).
4. Pre-Samaritan: DSS manuscripts which reflect the textual form of the Samaritan Pentateuch, although the Samaritan Bible is later and contains information not found in these earlier scrolls, (such as God's holy mountain at Shechem, rather than Jerusalem). These manuscripts, characterized by orthographic corrections and harmonizations with parallel texts elsewhere in the Pentateuch, are about five percent of the Biblical scrolls and include 4QpaleoExod-m.
5. Non-aligned: No consistent alignment with any of the other four text types. About 10 percent of the Biblical scrolls, they include 4QDeut-b, 4QDeut-c, 4QDeut-h, 4QIsa-c, and 4QDan-a.[60][61][i]

The textual sources present a variety of readings; Bastiaan Van Elderen compares three variations of Deuteronomy 32:43, the Song of Moses:[59][*failed verification*]

| **Deuteronomy 32.43, Masoretic** | **Deuteronomy 32.43, Qumran** | **Deuteronomy 32.43, Septuagint** |
|---|---|---|
| | **1 Shout for joy, O heavens, with him** | **1 Shout for joy, O heavens, with him** |
| | **2 And worship him, all you divine ones** | **2 And let all the sons of God worship him** |
| **1 Shout for joy, O nations, with his people** | | **3 Shout for joy, O nations, with his people** |
| | | **4 And let all the angels of God be strong in him** |
| **2 For he will avenge the blood of his servants** | **3 For he will avenge the blood of his sons** | **5 Because he avenges the blood of his sons** |
| **3 And will render vengeance to his adversaries** | **4 And he will render vengeance to his adversaries** | **6 And he will avenge and recompense justice to his enemies** |
| | **5 And he will recompense the ones hating him** | **7 And he will recompense the ones hating** |
| **4 And will purge his land, his people.** | **6 And he purges the land of his people.** | **8 And the Lord will cleanse the land of his people.** |

## Print editions[edit]

The text of all print editions is derived from the recensions of Origen, Lucian, or Hesychius:

- The *editio princeps* is the Complutensian Polyglot Bible. Based on now-lost manuscripts, it is one of the received texts used for the KJV (similar to *Textus Receptus*) and seems to convey quite early readings.[62]

- The Brian Walton Polyglot [it] is one of the few versions that includes a Septuagint not based on the Egyptian Alexandria-type text (such as Vaticanus, Alexandrinus and Sinaiticus), but follows the majority which agree (like the Complutensian Polyglot).
- The Aldine edition (begun by Aldus Manutius) was published in Venice in 1518. The editor says that he collated ancient, unspecified manuscripts, and it has been reprinted several times.
- The Roman or Sixtine Septuagint,[63] which uses Codex Vaticanus as the base text and later manuscripts for the lacunae in the uncial manuscript. It was published in 1587 under the direction of Antonio Carafa, with the help of Roman scholars Gugliemo Sirleto, Antonio Agelli and Petrus Morinus and by the authority of Sixtus V, to assist revisers preparing the Latin Vulgate edition ordered by the Council of Trent. It is the *textus receptus* of the Greek Old Testament and has been published in a number of editions, such as those of Robert Holmes and James Parsons (Oxford, 1798–1827); the seven editions of Constantin von Tischendorf, which appeared at Leipzig between 1850 and 1887 (the last two published after the death of the author and revised by Nestle), and the four editions of Henry Barclay Swete (Cambridge, 1887–95, 1901, 1909). A detailed description of this edition has been made by H. B. Swete in *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek* (1900), pp. 174–182.
- Grabe's edition was published in Oxford from 1707 to 1720 and reproduced, imperfectly, the Codex Alexandrinus of London. For partial editions, see Fulcran Vigouroux, *Dictionnaire de la Bible*, 1643 and later.
- Alfred Rahlfs, a Septuagint researcher at the University of Göttingen, began a manual edition of the Septuagint in 1917 or 1918. The completed *Septuaginta*, published in 1935, relies mainly on Vaticanus, Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus and presents a critical framework with variants from these and several other sources.[64]
- The Göttingen Septuagint *(Vetus Testamentum Graecum: Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editum)*, a critical version in multiple volumes published from 1931 to 2009, is not yet complete; the largest missing parts are the history books Joshua through Chronicles (except Ruth) and the Solomonic books Proverbs through Song of Songs. Its two critical frameworks present variant Septuagint readings and variants of other Greek versions.[65]
- In 2006, a revision of Alfred Rahlfs' *Septuaginta* was published by the German Bible Society. This revised edition includes over a thousand changes to the text and apparatus.[66] The text of this revised edition contains only changes in the diacritics and two wording changes in Isaiah 5:17 and 53:2 (Is 5:17 *ἀπειλημμένων* became *ἀπηλειμμένων*, and Is 53:2 *ἀνηγγείλαμεν* became by conjecture *ἀνέτειλε μένὰ*).[67]
- The *Apostolic Bible Polyglot* contains a Septuagint text derived primarily from the agreement of any two of the Complutensian Polyglot, the Sixtine, and the Aldine texts.[68]
- *Septuaginta: A Reader's Edition*, a 2018 reader's edition of the Septuagint[69] using the text of the 2006 revised edition of Rahlf's Septuaginta.[70]

## English translations[edit]

The first English translation (which excluded the apocrypha) was Charles Thomson's in 1808, which was revised and enlarged by C. A. Muses in 1954 and published by the Falcon's Wing Press. The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English was translated by Lancelot Brenton in 1854. It is the traditional translation and most of the time since its publication it has been the only one readily available, and it has continually been in print. The translation, based on the Codex Vaticanus, contains the Greek and English texts in parallel columns. It has an average of four footnoted, transliterated words per page, abbreviated *Alex* and *GK*. Updating the English of Brenton's translation.

*The Complete Apostles' Bible* (translated by Paul W. Esposito) was published in 2007. Using the Masoretic Text in the 23rd Psalm (and possibly elsewhere), it omits the apocrypha. A New English Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included Under that Title (NETS), an academic

translation based on the New Revised Standard version (in turn based on the Masoretic Text) was published by the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies (IOSCS) in October 2007.

The *Apostolic Bible Polyglot*, published in 2003, is a Greek-English interlinear Septuagint which may be used in conjunction with the reprint of Brenton's translation. It includes the Greek books of the Hebrew canon (without the apocrypha) and the Greek New Testament, numerically coded to the AB-Strong numbering system, and set in monotonic orthography. The version includes a concordance and index.

The *Orthodox Study Bible*, published in early 2008, is a new translation of the Septuagint based on the Alfred Rahlfs edition of the Greek text. Two additional major sources have been added: the 1851 Brenton translation and the New King James Version text in places where the translation matches the Hebrew Masoretic text. This edition includes the NKJV New Testament and extensive commentary from an Eastern Orthodox perspective.[71] Nicholas King completed *The Old Testament* in four volumes and *The Bible*.[72]

Brenton's Septuagint, Restored Names Version, (SRNV) has been published in two volumes. The Hebrew-names restoration, based on the Westminster Leningrad Codex, focuses on the restoration of the Divine Name and has extensive Hebrew and Greek footnotes.

The *Eastern Orthodox Bible* would have been an extensive revision and correction of Brenton's translation (which was primarily based on the Codex Vaticanus). With modern language and syntax, it would have had extensive introductory material and footnotes with significant inter-LXX and LXX/MT variants before being cancelled. The Holy Orthodox Bible, by Peter A. Papoutsis, and the Michael Asser English translation of the Septuagint are based on the Church of Greece's Septuagint text.

## Society and journal[edit]

The International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies (IOSCS), a non-profit learned society, promotes international research into and study of the Septuagint and related texts.[73] The society declared 8 February 2006 International Septuagint Day, a day to promote the work on campuses and in communities.[74] The IOSCS publishes the *Journal of Septuagint and Cognate Studies*.[75]

## See also[edit]

- ***Bible portal***

- Biblical apocrypha
- Biblical canon
- Book of Job in Byzantine illuminated manuscripts
- Books of the Bible
- Brenton's English Translation of the Septuagint
- Deuterocanonical books
- Documentary hypothesis – Theory that the Torah was composed over a long period by many authors
- *La Bible d'Alexandrie*
- Samareitikon

## Notes[edit]

1. ^ Jump up to:[a] [b] Not in the Orthodox canon, but originally included in the LXX.[45]
2. ^ The canon of the original Old Greek LXX is disputed. This table reflects the canon of the Old Testament as used currently in Orthodoxy.
3. ^ Βασιλειῶν (Basileiōn) is the genitive plural of Βασιλεία (Basileia).
4. ^ That is, *Of things set aside* from Ἔσδρας Α'.

5. ^ also called Τωβείτ or Τωβίθ in some sources.
6. ^ or Tōbeit or Tōbith
7. ^ Obdiou is genitive from "The vision *of* Obdias", which opens the book.
8. ^ Originally placed after 3 Maccabees and before Psalms, but placed in an appendix of the Orthodox canon.
9. ^ These percentages are disputed. Other scholars credit the Proto-Masoretic texts with 40 percent, and posit larger contributions from Qumran-style and non-aligned texts. *The Canon Debate*, McDonald and Sanders editors (2002), chapter 6: "Questions of Canon through the Dead Sea Scrolls" by James C. VanderKam, p. 94, citing private communication with Emanuel Tov on biblical manuscripts: Qumran scribe type c. 25 percent, proto-Masoretic Text c. 40 percent, pre-Samaritan texts c.5 percent, texts close to the Hebrew model for the Septuagint c. 5 percent and nonaligned c. 25 percent.

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# Further reading[edit]


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# External links[edit]

Greek Wikisource has original text related to this article:

**The complete Greek text of the modern Septuagint**

### General

- The Septuagint Online – Comprehensive site with scholarly discussion and links to texts and translations
- The Septuagint Institute
- *Jewish Encyclopedia* (1906): Bible Translations
- *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1913): Septuagint Version
- *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1913): Versions of the Bible
- Codex: Resources and Links Relating to the Septuagint
- Extensive chronological and canonical list of Early Papyri and Manuscripts of the Septuagint
- *Chisholm, Hugh, ed. (1911). "Septuagint" . Encyclopædia Britannica (11th ed.). Cambridge University Press.*

### Texts and translations

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- *"Online Greek Interlinear Bible (NT) with grammar text analysis". 2015. Archived from the original on December 28, 2012.*
- Septuagint/Old Greek Texts and Translations LXX finder, listing dozens of editions, both print and digital, in various languages and formats. A good place to start.
- Elpenor's Bilingual (Greek / English) Septuagint Old Testament Greek text (full polytonic unicode version) and English translation side by side. Greek text as used by the Orthodox Churches.
- Titus Text Collection: Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes (advanced research tool)
- Septuagint published by the Church of Greece
- Plain text of the whole LXX
- Bible Resource Pages – contains Septuagint texts (with diacritics) side-by-side with English translations
- The Septuagint in Greek as a Microsoft Word document. Introduction and book abbreviations in Latin. Non-free Antioch (Vusillus Old Face, Vusillus) TrueType font file required.
- The New English Translation of the Septuagint (NETS), electronic edition
- EOB: Eastern / Greek Orthodox Bible: includes comprehensive introductory materials dealing with Septuagintal issues and an Old Testament which is an extensive revision of the Brenton with footnotes.
- The Holy Orthodox Bible translated by Peter A. Papoutsis from the Septuagint (LXX) and the Official Greek New Testament text of the Ecumenical Patriarch.
- LXX2012: Septuagint in American English 2012 – The Septuagint with Apocrypha, translated from Greek to English by Sir Lancelot C. L. Brenton and published in 1885, with some language updates by Michael Paul Johnson in 2012 (American English)

**The LXX and the NT**

- Septuagint references in NT by John Salza
- An Apology for the Septuagint – by Edward William Grinfield

## 10. Brenton. History of the Septuagint … This is from the Preface and Introduction to the Septuagint itself written by Sir Lancelot C.L. Brenton in 1851

Here is a little background on the Septuagint. This is from the Preface and Introduction to the *Septuagint* itself written by *Sir Lancelot C.L. Brenton in 1851*:

"The Septuagint (from the Latin *septuaginta*, meaning "seventy," and frequently referred to by the roman numerals LXX) is the Greek translation of the Old Testament. The name derives from the tradition that it was made by seventy (or seventy-two) Jewish scholars at Alexandria, Egypt during the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus (285-247 B.C.).

"**The earliest version** of the Old Testament Scriptures which is extant, or of which we possess any certain knowledge, is the translation executed at Alexandria in the third century before the Christian era.

"The Septuagint version having been current for about three centuries before the time when the books of the New Testament were written, it is not surprising that **the Apostles should have used it more often than not in making citations from the Old Testament.** They used it as an honestly made version in pretty general use at the time when they wrote. They did not on every

occasion give an authoritative translation of each passage de nova [which means anew], but **they used what was already familiar** to the ears of converted Hellenists, when it was sufficiently accurate to suit the matter in hand. In fact, they used it as did their contemporary Jewish writers, Philo and Josephus, but not, however, with the blind implicitness of the former.

"The veneration with which the Jews had treated this version [the Septuagint] (as is shown in the case of Philo and Josephus) [because Philo and Josephus quoted the Septuagint], gave place to a very contrary feeling when they [the Jews] found how it could be used against them in argument: hence they decreed the version, and sought to deprive it of all authority. [Previous to this, it was the Word of God as they were concerned. But as soon as the early church started using it against them and pointing out the depravity of Judaism, they tried to discredit the Septuagint]. As the Gentile Christians were generally unacquainted with Hebrew, they were unable to meet the Jews on the ground which they now took; and as the Gentile Christians…fully embraced…its authority and inspiration, they necessarily regarded the denial on the part of the Jews of its accuracy, as little less than blasphemy, and as proof of their blindness."

The Jews upheld the Septuagint very strongly for the first 300 years as the Word of God, but when the Christians took a hold of it, then the Jews rejected it. Then the Jews started rewriting the Septuagint in the 2nd and 3rd centuries to suit their purposes. They were "Making the word of God of none effect through [their] tradition " (Mark 7:13).

The following is from the introduction of the book called "*Grammar of the Septuagint Greek" by Connie Bearer and Stock, written in 1905*:

"The work of Origen might enlighten the learned but it did not effect the unique position held in the church by the Septuagint ever since it was taken over by the Hellenistic Jews. We are familiar with the constant appeal made by the writers of the New Testament to quote scripture, an appeal couched in such words as "it is written" or "as the scripture saith." **In the great majority of cases, the scripture thus appealed to is undoubtedly the Septuagint. Seldom, if ever, is it the Hebrew original.** We have seen how, even before the Christian era, **the Septuagint had acquired for itself the position of an inspired book.** Some four centuries after that era, Augustine remarks that the Greek speaking Christians, for the most part, did not even know that there was any other Word of God than the Septuagint.

"So, when other nations became converted to Christianity and wanted the scriptures in their own languages, **it was almost always the Septuagint which formed the basis of the translation.** This was so in the case of the early Latin version, which was in use before the Vulgate, and it was so also in the case of the translations made in Coptic, Ethiopic, Armenian, Georgian, Gothic, and other languages. The only exception to the rule is the first Syriac version, which was made direct from the Hebrew. This Syriac version, by the way, when translated into English, lines up harmoniously with the Septuagint when translated into English. When, at the close of the forth century, Jerome had recourse to the Hebrew original and revised it in the acceptable Latin text, the authority of the Septuagint stood in the way of the immediate acceptance of his work. The churches of Christ, said Augustine, do not think that anyone is to be preferred to the authority of so many men chosen out of the high priest Eliasar for the accomplishment of so great a work."

For those who favor the King James, the King James Bible, printed in 1810, called the "*Potters Standard Edition*", happens to talk about the Septuagint. Here is what that King James Bible said.

"**The most remarkable translation of the Old Testament into Greek is called the Septuagint**, which, if the opinion of some eminent writers is to be credited, was made in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, about 270 years before the Christian era. At any rate, **it is undoubtedly the most ancient that is now extant**. The five books of Moses were translated first in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, King of Egypt, and others were added until the whole Old Testament was finished, and the version dates about 270 years before the birth of Christ. The transcendent value of this version may be seen from the extensive usage that it had attained in Jewish synagogues, from the fact that **our blessed Lord and the apostles habitually quoted from it**, and also from the fact that it helped to determine the state of the Hebrew text at the time when the version was made. Besides, it establishes, beyond all doubt, the point that our Lord and his inspired apostles recognized the duty of rendering the Word into the vulgar tongue of all people so that all men might, in their own speech, hear the wonderful things of the Lord. **All the authors of the New Testament appear to have written in the Greek language. That this tongue was already familiar to them as a vehicle to express God's inspired Word is evident from their frequent use of the Greek translation, the Septuagint, in quoting the Old Testament** and from the remarkable accordance of their style with the style of that ancient and precious version."

The reason the Septuagint came about is because in Alexandria, Alexander the Great had come through and conquered many of those nations, and Greek became the predominant language. So they took the original Law, and translated it into Greek for those Jews that no longer spoke Hebrew, and also to convert many of the Greeks over to Judaism. They translated the original into the Greek at approximately 285 BC. Basically, you see many of the quotes from the New Testament and they're direct quotes from the Septuagint, you don't find the same terminology in the original Hebrew.

This is one of the reasons the Septuagint has been buried. A Maxim of Law states, "the law is sometimes hid but it never dies". Through my studies, I thought the Law was buried in 1861, but I'm finding out it goes much farther than that. And the Septuagint is part of the burying of that Law so we do not have it in out hands to use it against the powers that be, and they are the ones who have hidden it, so that they can retain control for commercial and power purposes. The maxims of Law have their roots in the Law of God, and are quoted verbatim from the Septuagint, but they're hiding both of them from the public. But when you use them against them, it stops them cold. Especially when you say, just like Jesus did, "It is written in the word of God", and then turning around on them and using a maxim and saying, "and is it not written in your law that…" and nailing them with their own public records and nailing them airtight with the words out of their own mouth. So they can't escape when you hit them with the Word of God and with their own law that comes from the Word of God, which proves that they know the Word of God is true.

## Proponent One

Our first Proponent covered is from the *Introduction to The Septuagint Bible*, as translated into the English language by Charles Thomson in 1808, which gives us much insight into some previously unpublicized history and facts concerning the Hebrew Masoretic and Greek Septuagint texts of the Old Testament. Some of its more important points read as follows:

"By the end of the first century of the Christian era—the first of several to be filled with fierce religious controversies—the official Hebrew biblical text had already become considerably altered from what it was in the third, or for that matter in the second or first centuries preceding the Christian era,—thus furnishing grist for the controversial mill, by enabling post-Christian Jewish

proponents to answer any opponents who might quote from the Septuagint Bible text, by saying that it was "not the same" as the Hebrew. Of course it was not, for the Hebrew text had changed during the first century of the Christian era, as even a cursory examination of the older and later texts will prove. To cite one of the striking instances of such alterations, "the angels of God" in the ancient Septuagint text of Deuteronomy 32:8 became "the children of Israel" in the post-christian Hebrew version. As Swete after a survey of the evidence concludes:

"At some time between the age of the LXX and that of Aquila (ca. 125A.D.) a thorough revision of the Hebrew Bible must have taken place, probably under official direction; and the evidence seems to point to the Rabbinical school which had its center in Jamnia in the years that followed the fall of Jerusalem as the source from which this revision proceeded. Among the Rabbis of Jamnia were Eleazar, Joshua, and Akiba, the reputed teachers of Aquila." *H. B. Swete, An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek, op. cit., p.320*

The changes that appeared in post-Christian times were literally followed thereafter, particularly after being formally crystallized by the 7th century Hebrew "traditionalists" (who were, however, often following a post-Christian tradition) called the Masoretes, from masorah, "tradition." It is little argument to say that the greatest Messianic prophecies remained unaltered in the 100A.D. Hebrew text which has come down to us as the present masoretic text; for to orthodox Jewry, especially in more ancient times, the Messiah was still to come, for whom those prophetic texts served very well. Hence, there existed no doctrinal need for such alteration in the least. Secondly, there was a definite, and often strongly provoked controversial need for some alterations, consequential or not, which would enable it to be said that the ancient Septuagint translation, so widely used in the Hellenistic world, was "not the same" as the "Hebrew" text.

The oldest Hebrew text in existence in the third century B.C. had been used by the early Septuagint translators; but it is unfortunate that in post-Christian times all Hebrew manuscripts containing the older text increasingly found their way into the genizah, the cemetery near every large ancient synagogue for abandoned scrolls of the Torah and other sacred writings. This fact modern discoveries in the old Cairo synagogue have further substantiated. The oldest literary evidence of the Bible—the Septuagint vellum manuscripts, the Samaritan Pentateuch, and the biblical papyrus scrolls—all tend to agree with each other more than with the present Hebrew text, which dates no earlier than 100 years after the Christian era had begun. Unfortunately, late text was relied upon by both Origen and St. Jerome as the "original" Hebrew in their work of redaction and translation, and the same dependence was used by Luther and the King James committee. Five out of the six columns in Origen's comparative Hexapla represent the 100A.D. text, and he even tried to adapt the sixth or Septuagint column to it in a natural desire to approximate what he believed to be the Hebrew original. Interestingly enough, in St. Jerome's version, as finally accepted in the Vulgate Bible, we still find the Septuagint version of the Psalms, as well as several books from the older version."

## Proponent Two

Our second Proponent covered is from *Potter's Standard Bible*, published in 1871, containing *A Concise Treatise on the Evidences of the Genuineness, Authenticity, Inspiration, Preservation, and Value of the Word of God*. This particular Bible was "Translated out of the Original Languages." In other words, its Old Testament was translated from the Masoretic Hebrew. But in its opening Treatise, its author, Alfred Nevin, makes no mention of the Masoretes and their treatment of the

original Hebrew texts. But he does make several very telling statements concerning the Septuagint and other translations of the Word of God, as follows:

"Allusion has been made to the Septuagint, by far the most famous and valuable of all the old versions of the entire Jewish Scriptures. From the time of Alexander the Great numerous colonies of Jews had settled in Egypt, and as they lost the use of the Hebrew tongue the necessity became urgent that the Scriptures should be rendered into Greek for their benefit. Accordingly, the Septuagint (i.e., seventy) was prepared by different authors, and it was so called because seventy, or rather seventy-two, elders of the Sanhedrim at Alexandria are believed to have examined and approved of the work. The five books of Moses were translated first in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, and others were added until the whole Old Testament was finished, and the version dates about two hundred and eighty years before the birth of Christ. The transcendent value of this version may be seen from the extensive usage that it obtained in Jewish synagogues, from the fact that our blessed Lord and the Apostles habitually quoted from it, and also from the fact that it helps to determine the state of the Hebrew text at the time that the version was made. Besides, it establishes beyond all doubt the point that our Lord and His inspired Apostles recognized the duty of rendering the Word into the vulgar tongues of all people, so that all men might in their own speech hear the wonderful things of the Lord.

The New Testament was originally written in Greek; and no sooner was the Gospel spread through the nations than it was found necessary to translate the inspired writings for each into its proper tongue. Some translations of the Old Testament, different from the Septuagint, were made into Greek from 128 to 200A.D. It is generally believed that the church at Antioch was favoured with a Syrian translation of the Bible as early as the year 100. The Ethiopians of Abbysinia have a version of the Bible, which they ascribe to Frumentius, of the fourth century. Chrysostom, who lived in the end of the fourth, and Theodoret, who lived in the middle of the fifth century, both inform us that they had the Syrian, Indian, Persian, Armenian, Ethiopic, and Scythian versions. The ancient Egyptians had the Scriptures translated into their language. The Georgians have a version in their ancient language. The most ancient German translation is supposed to have been made by Ulphilas, A.D. 360. The Old Testament of all these translations, except the Syrian, **is taken from the Septuagint**, and not from the Hebrew text."

## Masoretic Hebrew

"The English names of the Hebrew letters are written with much less uniformity than those of the Greek because there has been more dispute respecting their powers. This is directly contrary to what one would have expected. Since the Hebrew names are words originally significant of other things in the letters and the Greek are not. **The original pronunciation of both languages is admitted to be lost**." *The Grammar of English Grammar, 9th Edition, 1865.*

So, if anybody runs around and says you have to pronounce a particular name a certain way (Yahweh, Jehovah, etc), where did he find this out? You don't get pronunciation from reading a book, you get pronunciation from other people telling you, or hearing the sound of it being pronounced. For example, when you read the Septuagint, you have the Greek sitting in front of you, but you don't know how to pronounce it, and it really doesn't matter. **What is important is the spirit behind the Word.** When you look at the King James and see the sentence structure, syntax, and everything else all backwards, then you pick up the Septuagint, you know that somewhere along the line something was inverted or flipped over. Well, for what purpose?

When you look at 2 Timothy 2:15 and it tells you to be diligent, go ahead and look at the original Greek. It doesn't matter what the pronunciation is. What you're after is, "What does the word mean? What is the spirit behind the word? What is the power in the word?" **To know the law is not to know the words, to know the law is the power IN the words. And that is the character of a sound mind.** That was the character that Christ evidenced to us every step of his walk here with us. **And you cannot possibly get a better rendition of what the Law is than what the Septuagint has written on its sheets of paper.**

**The King James' Old Testament is translated from the Masoretic Hebrew, not the original Hebrew**. By the time the King James came around, **the original Hebrew had been lost**. What the Masorites did, between the 8th and 10th centuries, was they took the liberty within themselves to **add** vowel signs to the original Hebrew Alphabet. The original Hebrew alphabet had only 22 letters and had no vowels. The Hebrew alphabet is different from all other alphabets in this regard. For example, the English alphabet must take letters and put them into groups and call them words, but in Hebrew, the letters themselves are words.

"The names of the 22 **letters** in Hebrew are without dispute proper **words**. For they are not only significant of the letters of names but have, in general, if not in every instance, **some other meaning** in that language. Thus, the mysterious ciphers which the English reader meets with and wonders over as he reads the 119th Psalm may be resolved according to some of the Hebrew grammar as follows." *The Grammar of English Grammar, 9th Edition, 1865.*

Then this book lists the various letters. For example, the letter ALEPH. When the 119th Psalm opens up, the very first letter you run into is **ALEPH**. It means "an ox or a leader". It is the first letter of their alphabet, (and also means the number one). The original Hebrew alphabet is the only alphabet that has this characteristic peculiar to it; there are no other alphabets that have this peculiar characteristic. He lists the other 21 letters also, but it will get involved so I will just mention a few more.

**BETH** is the next letter, and it means "house" (and also means the number two). **GIMEL**, the third letter, refers to a camel (and also means the number three). It's obvious that we get our word "camel" from "GIMEL". So, you're a sojourner, your house is moving, and somebody is the leader, and that's Christ! **DALETH**, or "D" as we would call it, means "a door"! And who's the door? That would be Christ (John 10:7,9). DALETH also means the number four. This is all the subject matter the 119th Psalm concerns itself with, **the original Hebrew alphabet**. That's why it's the longest chapter in the entire scriptures!

Now, if I start taking liberties within myself and say, "Gee, there aren't any vowels in this alphabet. Why don't I start adding these little points in there and I'll re-create something here." **What have I now done to a language that was perfect at its conception?** We aren't supposed to be tampering with the Word of God. We are not to take away or add to God's Word (Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32, Proverbs 30:6, Jeremiah 26:2, Revelation 22:18-19). But this is what the Masorites did.

This is the reason why the New Testament quotations of the Old Testament vary so much. because the writers of the New Testament quoted from the Septuagint, not the Masoretic Hebrew text!

"...the writers of the New Testament seem often to differ from those of the Old, because they appear uniformly to quote from some copy of the Septuagint version; and most of their quotations agree verbally, and often even literally, with one or other of the copies of that version which subsist to the present day." *Clarke's Commentaries, The New Testament, Volume 5A, page 48.*

## Verse Comparisons

In this study, we will be comparing the Septuagint to the King James Bible. However, almost every bible in existence uses the Masoretic Hebrew for its Old Testament translation. Therefore, in this comparison, all bibles that use the Masoretic Hebrew texts are on an equal basis here. We use the King James Bible because it's one of the oldest and most read bibles.

When Jesus told the Pharisees, "Search the **scriptures**; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39), he was not talking about the King James Version (and then we'll have to ask which KJV), or any version of the Bible, for **bibles were not in existence at this time.** The scriptures Jesus was referring to were the **Greek Old Testament** (the Septuagint) and the **Hebrew Old Testament** books.

One of the scriptures that you hear all the time is 2 Timothy 1:7, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a **sound mind**." But preachers never tell you what a sound mind is! I mean, is a sound mind going and getting certified by your psychiatrist that you're OK? What is a sound mind? You can search the King James for what a "sound mind" is, but you will never find it. You will find it in the Septuagint, however.

Proverbs 9:10 (KJV): "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding."

Proverbs 9:10 (LXX): "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the council of saints is understanding: **for to know the law is the character of a sound mind**."

There is no comparison between the two, the KJV leaves out half of this verse. You can't believe how often this occurs between the Septuagint and the King James Version; they left so much out. You have to ask yourself, why would the translators not want people to know that to know the law is the character of a sound mind? Ignorance is probably one of the main controlling factors for those is power. And this is one of the reasons they founded the doctrine that we live under grace and not under the law so heavily, as if they were opposed.

Now that we know that if you don't have the fear of the Lord, and the council of the saints, and if you don't know the law, then you have an "**unsound mind**," let's go on and find out from the Septuagint how this comes about. How do we end up developing this unsound mind? Well, by listening to politicians, lawyers, teachers, the people in the media, etc.

Proverbs 26:22 in the KJV doesn't tell you much at all. It sounds soft. It's poetic and it leaves you hanging up in the air. It's like reading Alice in Wonderland or Shakespeare. Compare this same verse to the Septuagint:

Proverbs 26:22 (KJV): "The words of a **talebearer** are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly."

Proverbs 26:22 (LXX): "The words of **cunning knaves** are soft; but they smite even to the inmost parts of the bowels."

If you look up the word "knave," which is not used much anymore, you will discover it means "a dishonest, deceitful person, tricky rascal, rogue." This is synonymous with evildoer. Whereas the term the KJV uses is "talebearer," and simply means "gossip," or someone who is a tattle tale, or someone who likes to read fairy tales. And how many pastors say that words are not important? Words can kill you, they get down right into your gut and they rob you of your physical life and your spiritual life.

Now, let's look at Proverbs 18:19-21. The King James and Septuagint are so diametrically opposed, that it's scary.

Proverbs 18:19 (KJV): "A brother **offended** is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle."

Proverbs 18:19 (LXX): "A brother **helped** by a brother is as a strong and high city; and is as strong as a well-founded palace."

The King James' version just does not make much sense. It's supposed to be a brother "helped" by a brother, not a brother "offended" by a brother. This is the importance of fellowship and why brothers have to help brothers. **Brothers helping brothers become a fortress!** And it all has to do with words, as the next verse states.

Proverbs 18:20 (KJV): "A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; and with the **increase** of his lips shall he be filled."

Proverbs 18:20 (LXX): "A man fills his belly with the fruits of his mouth; and he shall be satisfied with the **fruits** of his lips."

In this verse, the King James is basically saying that the more man talks, he's going to be filled. It sounds like a formula for a politician or a lawyer. Same repetition as the Pharisees in the marketplace. But the Septuagint says by the "fruits" of man's lips, not by the "increase" of his lips. **It's WHAT he says, and not how MUCH he says, that's important.**

The King James version of Proverbs 18:20 contradicts many other verses within the King James itself. Here are a few examples, Proverbs 10:19, "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise." Proverbs 13:3, "He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction." Proverbs 14:23, "In all labour there is profit: but the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury." Proverbs 16:30, "...moving his lips he bringeth evil to pass." Proverbs 17:28, "Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding." Ecclesiastes 5:3, "...a fool's voice is known by multitude of words." Ecc.10:14, "A fool also is full of words."

**When the King James Bible was first published in 1611, it included the Apocrypha.** In the King James' own Apocrypha, in Ecclesiasticus, it states, "A man of many words shall be hated." Now, sometimes people are chided for using the Apocrypha, because it supposedly doesn't line up with the Word of God. But my first question is, "Well, what are you claiming to be the Word of God? The King James Bible itself?" Now, right here, in Proverbs 18:20, is an **admission** from the King James Bible. It is inconsistent with itself, and with the Apocrypha. And if it's inconsistent, it must not be the truth. Something had to be set aside, and guess what they set aside? The Apocrypha, because it had the appearance that it did not line up with the rest of what King James had put out there as the Word of God.

Proverbs 18:21 (KJV): "Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that **love it** shall eat the fruit thereof."

Proverbs 18:21 (LXX): "Life and death are in the power of the tongue; and they that **rule it** shall eat the fruits thereof."

They will eat the fruits by ruling their own tongue, not by loving it. Those who love their tongue will use a multitude of words and increase their lips, which are condemned in scripture. However, by ruling our tongue, and being particular and careful about the words we are using, and knowing the meanings, knowing the definitions, we will bear the fruits of it. Also, this verse starts out "life and death", but the King James reverses it.

Here is another verse comparison which is opposed to each other. Either it's David's cup or God's, it can't be both.

Psalms 23:5 (KJV): "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; **my cup** [David's cup] runneth over."

Psalms 22:5 (LXX): "Thou has prepared [passed tense] a table before me in presence of them that afflict me: thou hast thoroughly anointed my head with oil; and **thy cup** [God's cup] cheers me like the best wine."

Let's see what's going on in the financial realm today. Here is an example of how the King James promotes the idea to give your hard earned money to some man-made Church:

Proverbs 3:9 (KJV): "Honour the LORD with thy **substance**, and with the firstfruits of all thine **increase**:"

Proverbs 3:9 (LXX): "Honour the Lord with thy **just labours**, and give him the first of thy **fruits of righteousness**.

You see, you don't honor God with the "substance" of you "increase" (money), you honor God through your godly "labours" and your "righteousness." The problem is that the people who are out there doing the robbing certainly aren't going to want to hear it, but even the people who are being robbed don't even like to hear these truths.

Isaiah 3:12-13 (KJV): "As for my people, **children** are their oppressors, and **women** rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths."

Isaiah 3:12-13 (LXX): "O my people, your **extractors** strip you, and **extortioners** rule over you: O my people, **they that pronounce you blessed** lead you astray, and pervert the path of your feet."

It is not "children" and "women" who are the oppressors, as the King James would have you believe, it is "extractors" and "extortioners" who are the oppressors. Also notice how the King James deletes the fact that "they who pronounce you blessed", or, in other words, hypocritical **religious leaders**, lead you astray and pervert you. Why would the King James hide this fact?

The above verse from the Septuagint sounds exactly like America today. What is an "extractor"? **Extraction** means, "the act or process of extracting, compulsion to give or furnish, a levying by force, a driving to compliance as the extraction of tribute or of obedience, hence

extortion." And to **extract** means, "to rest as a fee or reward when none is due." And this is what is going on in the country today by the whole corporate structure. If you look at the Internal Revenue Code at section 61, it will tell you that the tax is "imposed". Go to any dictionary, and **imposed** means, "To force (oneself, one's presence or will, etc.) on another or others without right or invitation; obtrude."

So you are without excuse when somebody, like the IRS, is telling you, "Here, I'm doing this without rights. Are you going to buy into it? I know I don't have the right to do it, I know I'm acting unlawfully. Do you want to partake of my evil…my sin? Do you want me to be a parasite to get along in my life, regardless of whatever kind of life you might have?"

**Everything that the natural man has done, he has made admissions every step of the way that he has gone.** There's been no such thing as a conspiracy, or of doing things in secret. All these things are already written down. But are you diligently seeking? Do you know what it is that you read when you read? Do you know what's being said to you? Do you know the words that are said to you? Do you know what they mean and how they are being used? Do you understand your own grammar? Do you understand syntax? Do you understand sentence structure? This is what's required of being diligent.

Ecclesiasticus 21:8 (LXX - Apocrypha): "He that buildeth his house with **other men's money** is like one that gathereth himself stones for the tomb of his burial."

This is where the term **mortgage** comes from. **Mort** means "death" (as in mortuary or mortality), and **gage** means "pledge". **Mort-gage** means a "dead pledge." In *Bouvier's Law Dictionary of 1856*, **Dead-Pledge** is defined as "a mortgage of lands or goods." **A mortgage means you're going to give the banks your money and they're not going to give you anything back!**

Nehemiah 5:3-5, "…We have **mortgaged** our lands, vineyards, and houses…We have **borrowed money** for the king's tribute, and that upon our lands and vineyards…and, lo, we bring into **bondage** our sons and our daughters to be servants, and some of our daughters are brought unto **bondage** already: neither is it in our power to redeem them; for other men have our lands and vineyards."

Leviticus 25:23, "The land **shall not be sold** for ever: for **the land is mine**; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me."

Nobody, at law, owns any land. So where do all these mortgage companies, banks, and the government get "titles" to God's property? They made it up! So, you can see why the powers that be, that were financing the various versions of the bible, had a vested monetary interest, and that's why they changed all these truths. And all these truths are readily available in the Septuagint.

## Comparing New Testament quotations of Old Testament verses

The following verses will show how Jesus and the apostles quoted from the Greek Septuagint. Anyone can easily verify the divergent readings between the Septuagint and Masoretic texts by merely using a reference Bible that will identify the sources of quotations used by the New Testament writers. For example, 1 Peter 4:18 is quoting from Proverbs 11:31 in the Old Testament. The only

problem is that 1 Peter 4:18, although faithful to Proverbs 11:31 in the Septuagint version, is barely recognizable in the Masoretic text - the King James version.

**1)** 1 Peter 4:18 is barely recognizable in the King James version.

1 Peter 4:18 "And if the righteous scarcely be **saved**, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

Proverbs 11:31 (LXX): "If the righteous scarcely be **saved**, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

Proverbs 11:31 (KJV): "Behold, the righteous shall be **recompensed** in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner."

**2)** James quotes from Proverbs 3:34 here. Although it is identical to the Septuagint, it is barely recognizable in the King James.

James 4:6 "…God **resisteth** the **proud**, but giveth grace unto the **humble**."

Proverbs 3:34 (LXX): "The Lord **resists** the **proud**; but he gives grace to the **humble**."

Proverbs 3:34 (KJV): "Surely he **scorneth** the **scorners**: but he giveth grace unto the **lowly**."

**3)** Again, this verse in Isaiah, which Jesus quoted from in Matthew, is not recognizable in the King James Bible!

Matthew 15:9 (KJV): "But in vain do they **worship** me, Teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men."

Isaiah 29:13 (LXX): "…but in vain do they **worship** me, teaching the commandments and doctrines of men."

Isaiah 29:13 (KJV): "…and their **fear** of me is a commandment of men which hath been taught them..."

**4)** Notice Jesus' words in Matthew 21:16 when he quoted from Psalm 8:2. They do not come from the King James Bible, but from the Septuagint.

Matthew 21:16, "…Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast **perfected praise**?"

Psalms 8:2 (LXX): "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou **perfected praise**…"

Psalms 8:2 (KJV): "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou **ordained strength**…"

**5)** Revelation 2:26 says, "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:" Will those who overcome rule the heathen, or will they hurt and do evil to them? The next verse quotes Psalms 2:9:

Revelation 2:27 "And he shall **rule** them with a rod of iron…"

Psalms 2:9 (LXX): "Thou shalt **rule** them with a rod of iron…"

Psalms 2:9 (KJV): "Thou shalt **break** them with a rod of iron…"

**6)** Matthew 21:42 says, "Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures..." Well, the answer is they sure did not read this passage from the Masoretic Hebrew scriptures, but they did read it from the Septuagint!

Matthew 21:42: "...The stone which the builders **rejected**, the same is become the **head of the corner**:

Psalms 117:22 (LXX): "The stone which the builders **rejected**, the same is become the **head of the corner.**"

Psalms 118:22 (KJV): "The stone which the builders **refused** is become the **head stone of the corner**."

## Best Evidence

Now, is the King James the best evidence? Which one has the better testimony? **Even the King James Bible itself is quoting the Septuagint**, which the King James admits is a superior and better source. So, the above verses are witnesses, and there are four witnesses that state the Septuagint is a better evidence. The King James Bible itself is one witness, Jesus is another, Peter is another, and James is another. But since all the writers of the New testament quoted from the Septuagint, they are all witnesses!

King James is quoting from the Septuagint, a superior authority than his own. If you were to put the King James on trial, and you look up the Rules concerning Best Evidence in a court of law, the Rule of Best Evidence states, "A writing is the best evidence of its own content, and must be introduced, unless it has been lost or destroyed."

Well, the Septuagint has not been lost or destroyed, it's still here. And even the King is quoting from it! But he's not bringing forth the original writing in his own bible. So, the King James Bible is obviously not the best evidence. Its Old Testament is from some other copy of some other rendition, which is the Masoretic Hebrew, which came about between the 8th and 10th century after Christ. So the King James Bible is not even translated from the original Hebrew! But **the Septuagint WAS translated from the original Hebrew 285 years before Christ.** So, here we have established that the King James Bible is inferior, or secondary, or even hearsay evidence if you will. We are using the King James against them, and they can't deny that.

The Rule concerning Best Evidence also states, "As understood and applied in present day practice, the best evidence rule requires that whenever a party seeks to prove the contents of a writing, he must produce the original writing, or satisfactory account for its absence." Well, we can satisfactory account for the absence of the original Hebrew because we can't find it! It's lost. What is alleged to be Hebrew today, or is spoken as Hebrew, is the Masoretic Hebrew. Nobody really knows what the original Hebrew sounded like, or how it was pronounced.

So, what is the Best Evidence Rule attempting to present? "The best evidence rule is to prevent fraud." Well, if King James is quoting from the Septuagint, and Christ Jesus is quoting from the Septuagint, and the apostles are quoting from the Septuagint, King James is admitting to himself,

and admitting to the world, that his bible is fraudulent! It's not the best evidence. We're not trying to impugn anything, we're just seeing what the Rules of Evidence would say about the King James Bible, and how the law declares it. We're not saying that God can't use the King James Bible, because he certainly can and does. I know he did with me because I grew spiritually on the King James. **The King James is a stepping stone, but it's not the place to stay.** We move on. It's the watered down version, it's the **milk** of the Word, and the Septuagint is the **meat** of God's Word.

## Milk versus Meat

Hebrews 5:12-14 - Hebrews 6:1-3, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to **discern both good and evil**.
Therefore **leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ**, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment [because we already know those things]. And this will we do, if God permit."

But you can go into one of these 501(c)(3) corporate religious businesses, and they've been preaching the same message, and saying the same thing repetitiously, for years, over and over again. It's just a constant diet of watered down milk. All it's going to produce is **sophistry**, which means "one who teaches ethical or moral science for payment." And from the pulpit today, that's all you're getting. In all the Church businesses, they always get their money up front, and then you hear the sophistry afterwards. What man would by a piece of land, sight unseen? Or buy anything before seeing it or hearing it? So why would you put money in the plate before you even hear what this sophist has to say, or whether it's even close to the Word of God?

If you flip on a religious TV station, for example, you watch and listen to these guys expound on their theories of who God is, and all you're getting is the milk. **You can't survive on milk**. And if all you get is milk, you end up dying in the end, spiritually. This is why we fail to see the fruits of the spirit being manifest in people today; the love, the peace, the joy, and the other fruits of the spirit. If you look around the world today, there is no joy. The abundant life is gone. And it's all due to the fact that they haven't matured in the Word, they've stayed on the milk and have not eaten more solid food. If you keep someone on milk forever, they'll wind up dying on you. **You have to move on to more solid food.**

The same thing happens when you read from the King James Bible for instance. If you don't move on from its milk, and get into a more meatier substance (i.e. Brenton's Edition of The Septuagint, and George Ricker Berry's Interlinear Greek English New Testament), you will end up dying, your bones start to get soft, your muscles start to wither, you're no longer exercising.

A soldier is always out there exercising so that he may be ready and useful for battle. But if you're going to use inferior tools, or if you're not going to be fully exercised, or you're only going to go through the motions but never really do them, then all you're ending up with is a fat, lazy military who, when the order is given to march, they sit back and say, "Well, according to my interpretation of this passage of the order, it doesn't mean this", and so the order is never executed. Then another order comes down. Now you've got a second order when the first order hasn't even been executed

yet, because we've re-interpreted the first order. When the second order comes down, we re-interpret that, and that one doesn't get executed.

There's a lot of people out there hungry for the meat of the Word. The meat of the Word is what we saw executed in Christ. When we look at the word "**Proverb**" for example, there's a couple of places in the New Testament where the Greek word there is translated to a "parable." There's some textual critics that say this word should have been translated 'proverb." Well, if you break down the word proverb, the word **pro** means "either for or against", and **verb** is an action word. So 'proverb' is something to be done, or action. So, when Christ was speaking in parables, he was talking in a way that showed you how to **execute** whatever principle he was expounding in the proverb, which the Pharisees could not understand because they were not into execution, they were into philosophizing. The same word that's used as "proverb" in the Old Testament is the same word that's used in the New Testament in the Greek. And the Proverbs in the Old Testament, when you read them, they're not something that are static, they actually lift off the page and are actually performed and done. We may not know we are doing them at the time, consciously, because God has already written us a copy of the Law on our heart. And when you're executing a copy of the Law that he's written on your heart, you're not doing it with an intellectual interference.

When you read the Greek of the Septuagint, and then you go to the New Testament and read the Greek of the same thing that Christ was expounding, you'll also see the same words used . But you can't find those same words if you're reading an English only Bible, because the Old Testament words are from the Masoretic Hebrew which don't necessarily correspond to what was translated to the English from the Greek in the New Testament.

**Here is our Lord confirming what he wrote 285 years before he came! Why then would I need something that is a translation from another source that does not have God's seal of approval? There is not one place in the Masoretic Hebrew where they can show that God ever authorized them to change the original language by adding vowel points to it.** So, if there's no authority for doing such an act, then where's the source, cause, and origin of that act? It's in the heart of the man that authorized it, and out of the abundance of the heart does the mouth speaketh (Matthew 12:34, Luke 6:45). So, if the language has been corrupted without authority, then we know that whoever did it had an evil heart. Because the authority did not come from Christ himself.

Even in there own law, man admits that they know the truth, and one of their maxims of law states, "He who does not speak the truth is a betrayer of the truth." So, if people are doctoring up the truth intentionally, or they are not really speaking the truth, they are actually betraying the truth! They are traitors themselves. And they can't say, "I'm ignorant" because ignorance of the law is no excuse.

## Women and Wives

The Septuagint is replete with all kinds of wonderful information on women, both good and bad, and how to differentiate between the two. It answers the question of romance and involvement completely, and what to avoid, for both the women and the men that are out their looking for a husband or wife. With the introduction of television and soap operas, we are in about a third generation of women who have been raised on soap opera values, which are the commercial values

of the world. And the main job of the merchant is to get us to prostitute ourselves to turn away from what our true calling is in God, and sell ourselves out for the material things of the world.

Today, we sit in some homes and see people treating and acting like these situation comedies, cutting each other down. It's lazy comedy, because they can't really do anything funny, so they have to use shock and embarrassment to make them laugh because they don't know what humor really is. Then people start to imitate this and it destroys the family. And their main target were the wives, mothers, and women because the women are in the home and had the access to the television. And the merchants know that "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." Men are supposed to be protecting the women with God's Law.

**1)** Let's compare Proverbs 5:3-6.

Proverbs 5:3-6 (KJV): "For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a twoedged sword. Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell. Lest thou shouldest ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, that thou canst not know them."

This King James verse is pretty muddy. You can get a little bit out of it but not a whole lot. Here's the Septuagint reading:

Proverbs 5:3-6 (LXX): "Give no heed to a worthless woman; for honey drops from the lips of a harlot, who for a season pleases thy palate: but afterwards thou wilt find her more bitter than gall, and sharper than a two-edged sword. For the feet of folly lead those who deal with her down to the grave with death; and her steps are not established. For she goes not upon the paths of life; but her ways are slippery, and not easily known."

Now that doesn't leave too much left to the imagination and speculation, does it? This verse doesn't apply to just women in gender, you can also apply this to the philosopher, or to the feminized man, they do exactly the same thing. So, the sword cuts both ways. The word 'woman' is used here because these are the attributes that a woman of ill-repute exhibits, but these are the same attributes that a **feminized man**, who is also a man of ill-repute, also exhibits. This applies to everyone who sells themselves out from their calling and their purpose that the Lord has called them towards, which is only revealed in the Word of God; not on a soap opera, not on a sitcom, not on anything that comes out of the media.

**2)** Now you know why Paul would not suffer a woman to speak in a lawful assembly; he wasn't referring only to sex, he was referring to the **effeminate man**. Men with feminine characteristics. And this is why the Church has been feminized:

Proverbs 19:15 (KJV): "Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger."

Proverbs 19:15 (LXX): "Cowardice possesses the **effeminate man**; and the soul of the sluggard shall hunger."

You know, our lives are not reality, they're not real, we've been living according to a script. If you're relying on somebody else's script, what does that tell you about what kind of spirit you have in your heart? It's dead. We live according to the image that we hold in our mind, and we need to have the image we hold in our mind conformed to that of the only begotten Son of God. Otherwise, we're following the script of the world and the images that come over the television.

## Thoughts

There is not necessarily a conspiracy here by the King James translators. Since I came to the knowledge that the majority text is the Word of God, I wanted to find out more about the King James and the history of it. I bought into the "King James Only" thing for many, many years. I was reading the King James and it says to "study", instead of to "be diligent" (2 Timothy 2:15). Once I realized that this verse says to "be diligent", I decided to be diligent and look at the King James a little closer, and look at its history. And the King James isn't really a translation, it is a compilation of all the previous bibles of the reformation, such as the Coverdale, the Tyndale, the Great Bible, and the Geneva Bible. King James put their phrasing into his Bible.

What should somebody do when they find out that what they've believed is a lie? A maxim of Law states, "It is better to retrace your steps than to proceed wrongly."

There's a big difference between a translation and a transcription. A **transcription** is done word for word as close to the original as possible. And as soon as you start **translating**, you are interjection your own knowledge from the tree of good and evil. You're just interjecting your own opinions to translate whatever it is you're reading. That's why there's so much confusion when people start talking about, "Well what translation do I get?" Well, really you don't want any of them, what you really want is the transcription. A word for word transcription into the English language.

To give an example, When you read the Psalms in the King James Version, everything that David was saying was in the future tense, "God will do this." But in the Septuagint, it is in the passed tense. God had already done it, he had already accomplished it in David's life. The blessings of God, David had them all, and he knew it as long as he was obedient. He had everything that God had promised. And we are the same way, as long as we are obedient to God, we will receive the blessings of God. There's no futuristic tense there, we have all of these blessings, they are ours. But we have to be obedient, walking in faith, which means walking in true allegiance to God and not to man.

## Respecting Persons

To give you an example, when you go to the lineage's in Matthew and Luke that describe the earthly genealogy of Christ, the King James says, "Abraham begat Isaac, Isaac begat Jacob, Jacob begat Judas," etc. When you go to the way the Greek mind puts things down on paper, it reads, "Abraham generated the Isaac, the Isaac generated the Jacob, the Jacob generated the Judas." In other words, **the name that you carry is an attribute of who you are.**

From this point on, we see how names play a big role, and how, if you're generated by "The State," how the State has jurisdiction over you. When you give the recognition (i.e. you have the respect of persons), you stray away from God's Law. This is why Jesus is called either "Jesus the Christ," or "Christ Jesus," and never as "Jesus Christ".

God reveals to us everything we need to know in His Words, and especially in the Septuagint, and how important it is for us to know that we are never supposed to respect a man's person. And especially our own, because to respect means to acknowledge or to honor that. And as soon as we acknowledge that we are "persons" we step out of the jurisdiction of God, we step out of His Kingdom, we have acknowledged something that's false and not of Him, and we are saying to the

fictional powers that be, "Yea, I'm in your sandbox now and do with me what you want to because I'm a person. Have at me."

Proverbs 22:26 is only one of the many places that God brings this up. It doesn't do this as clearly in the King James, but it does in the Septuagint. But even in the King James, they didn't completely conceal it, but they didn't give you the key word there, but they do in other places in the King James, but they use it opaquely.

Proverbs 22:26 (KJV): "Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts."

Proverbs 22:26 (LXX): "Become not surety from **respect** of a man's **person**."

In other words, do not become a surety from even acknowledging the man's person. You're the man, and their own maxim of law reads, "every person is a man, but not every man is a person." So they know this, that all statutory fictions only have jurisdiction over the person. And the only way they can establish any kind of authority over you , to penalize you, is you have to consent and acknowledge to being that person first!

Now, the maxim of law states, "A slave is not a person." "A slave, and everything a slave has, belongs to his master." So, if you are a slave, or a servant of Christ, you don't fit that description of being the person described in their statutes. You're not there, you're not found. But you have to bring forth the best evidence at every turn. How do we know you're not a slave? By their fruits you will know them. 1 John 4:5, "They are of the world: therefore **speak** they of the world," so you don't speak of the world, you don't know the terms of the world, you don't have respect of persons, you don't fit the profile of being a person. This all has to be done in truth, and not a self serving declaration. "I am who I say I am." Oh really? Does the spirit of God bear witness of you? Or does the spirit of God bear witness against you? The Truth is, "I am who God says I am." That's where the truth is, because the Spirit is the truth, not the words that came out of your mouth.

John 7:18: "He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him."

So if you're speaking of yourself and you make a self serving declaration, and the spirit of God does not bear witness of the words that came out of your mouth, you're found out to be a liar, and therefore the perfection of God is not there.

James 2:9, "But if ye have **respect to persons**, ye commit **sin**, and are convinced of the law as **transgressors**."

Proverbs 24:23 (KJV): "These things also belong to the wise. It is not good to have **respect of persons** in judgment."

Proverbs 24:23 (LXX): "And this thing I say to you that are wise for you to learn: it is not good to give **respect of persons** in judgment."

Job 32:22 (KJV): "For I know not to give **flattering titles**; in so doing my maker would soon take me away."

Job 32:22 (LXX): "For I know not how to **respect persons**: and if otherwise, even the moths would eat me."

So Job knew the importance of not designating yourself as a creation of man, and negating the fact that you are a son of God, not a creation of the State. So there are millions of people running around that do not know who they are or what they are.

It's the spirit in the words that are written in God's Word that are life. The words themselves don't have any life as far as them sitting on the paper. That's why it was given to you in your heart that you might not sin against Him and that you might do His Will. The Septuagint speaks directly to your heart, simply.

## Other Contradictory verses in the King James Bible

1. The scripture specifically mentions seven nations that the Israelites were forbidden to enter into covenants with. All seven are listed in Deuteronomy 7:1. But for some reason, when these "seven" nations are repeated in other parts of scripture, the KJV deletes one of them, the Girgashites, whereas the Septuagint retains all seven of them (Exodus 23:23; 34:11). Likewise, Genesis 15:21 lists five nations, but the King James deletes one of them, the "Evites."
2. In Acts 7:14, Stephen relates the story of the Israelite nation and refers to 75 people who traveled from Canaan to Egypt in the emigration of Jacob's family. Genesis 46:27 and Exodus 1:5 in the King James falsely state "70." Genesis 46:27 and Exodus 1:5 in the Septuagint correctly read 75, which agrees with Acts 7:14. The Old Testament books, in most bibles, is translated from a corrupted Masoretic Text, which is why "70" is mistranslated at Genesis 46:27 and Exodus 1:5 in most bibles.
3. In the King James bible, 2 Samuel 24:13 says there would be seven years of famine, but 1 Chronicles 21:12 says three years of famine. In the Septuagint, both verses accurately read three years of famine.
4. In the King James bible, 2 Kings 8:26 says Ahaziah was 22 years old when he began his reign, 2 Chronicles 22:2 says he was 42 years old. The Septuagint accurately reads 22 years old for both.
5. In the King James Bible, 1 Kings 5:16 says there were 3300 overseers, and 2 Chronicles 2:18, speaking of the same thing, says there were 3600 overseers. In the Septuagint, both verses accurately read 3600 (3600 is also confirmed in III Kings, chapter 3, first paragraph, in the Septuagint).
6. Speaking of the same exact event, the King James Bible says there were 700 horsemen in 2 Samuel 8:4, but 7000 horsemen in 1 Chronicles 18:4. In the Septuagint, both verses accurately read 7,000 horsemen.
7. In the King James Bible, 1 Kings 7:26 says there were 2000 baths, and 2 Chronicles 4:5 says there were 3000 baths. In the Septuagint, 1 Kings 7:26 does not exist, so there's no contradiction.
8. In the King James Bible, 1 Kings 9:23 says there were 550 people that bear rule, and 2 Chronicles 8:10 says that 250 people bear rule. In the Septuagint, 1 Kings 9:23 does not exist, so there's no contradiction.
9. In Joshua 10:15, where this verse is omitted in the Septuagint, it can easily be seen that this verse, in the King James, does not belong and is out of place. Because the Israelitish army did not return to the camp at Gilgal till after the hanging of the five kings and the destruction of

their cities. This is sufficiently evident from the subsequent parts of this chapter. When all this business was done, and not before, is when they returned to the camp to Gilgal (see Joshua 10:43). This verse is omitted by the Septuagint; and it does not appear to have existed in the ancient hexaplar versions; it stands in its proper place in Joshua 10:43, and is not only useless in Joshua 10:15, but appears to be an encumbrance to the narrative. Should it be considered as genuine and in its proper place, I would propose that the camp at Gilgal should be read instead the camp at Makkedah, for we find from Joshua 10:21 that Joshua had a temporary camp there, after which we may suppose that Joshua having secured the cave, sent some detachments to scour the country and cut off all the remaining straggling Canaanites; when this was done they also returned to the camp at Makkedah, as is related Jos 10:21, and when the business was completed they struck the camp at Makkedah, and all returned to their fortified camp at Gilgal (Joshua 10:43).

### Actual Fragments of the Septuagint

The following are pictures of actual fragments of the Septuagint published and now at the museum of Cairo, *W.G WADELL, 1944, in Journal of Theological Studies, Volume 45 pages 158-161*. They show the tetragramaton untranslated in Hebrew square characters.

The word in the circle is YHWH. This is not Greek, it is Hebrew and is the Holy name of God. If you notice the text is in Greek, only the holy name was left untranslated. This name is also referred as the tetragramaton.

These are fragments of the book of Deutrononomy of a septuagint found in Egypt, possible dating around 100 B.C. the great discovery was that early copies of the septuagint did not substitute the name of God (YHWH) with GOD or LORD, but left it untranslated in Hebrew.

## 11. The Old Testament In Greek Swete

ACCORDING TO THE SEPTUAGINT

*EDITED FOR THE SYNDICS OF THE UNIVERSITY PRESS*

BY

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*PSALMS OF SOLOMON, ENOCH, THE ODES*

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## Introduction to Volume 1

IT is not the purpose of these pages to supply a general Introduction to the Septuagint. To repeat here the history of that Version, the legend of its birth, the destinies it fulfilled and the handling it received in the centuries that followed; to state the problems which it still offers for solution, and to furnish descriptive lists of its MSS. and printed editions, would be either to exceed the limits of a portable volume, or uselessly to epitomize the work of previous writers. At a future time the subject will claim the full consideration and careful treatment which a larger experience may render possible. For the present it may suffice to recall only so many of the facts as are necessary to illustrate the relation which this edition bears towards those which have preceded it, and to describe the method pursued and the materials employed in its preparation.

Since the invention of printing four primary editions of the Septuagint have issued from the press—the Complutensian, the Aldine, the Roman, and the Oxford representation of the Alexandrine text.

1. The Greek text of the O. T. in the Complutensian Polyglott (1514–1517) claims to be drawn partly from MSS. collected by Cardinal Ximenez himself, partly from others borrowed from the Vatican. "Testari possumus (so the Cardinal writes in the dedication of his work to Leo X.) … maximam laboris nostri partem in eo praecipue fuisse versatam ut … castigatissima omni ex parte vetustissimaque exemplaria pro archetypis haberemus; quorum quidem tam Hebraeorum quam Graecorum … multiplicem copiam variis ex locis non sine summo labore conquisivimus. Atque ex ipsis quidem Graeca Sanctitati tuae debemus, qui ex ista apostolica bibliotheca antiquissimos tum V. tum N. Testamenti codices perquam humane ad nos misisti, qui nobis in hoc negocio maximo fuerunt adiumento." Documentary evidence has been produced by Vercellone that the Vatican MSS. 330, 346 (= Holmes 108, 248) were lent to Ximenez, and a comparison of the Complutensian text with these MSS. shews an extensive and in places almost absolute agreement which suggests that they were largely used. Both MSS. are comparatively late. It is uncertain to what extent the Cardinal availed himself of other materials; but there is no ground for supposing that he had access to the great Vatican MS. or to any of our uncial codices.

2. The Greek Bible which came from the Aldine Press a year and eight months after the completion of the Complutensian Polyglott sets up a similar claim to MS. authority, without affording any clue to the MSS. employed. But it is probably safe to hazard the conjecture that they came from the immediate neighbourhood. Holmes found a remarkable agreement amongst all the Venice MSS. of the Pentateuch which were examined for his work; and one of these when reexamined by Lagarde for Genesis proved to be so far in the closet harmony with the Aldine text. Moreover the language of the Aldine editor is consistent with the belief that he was content to use the MS. treasures which were close at hand; there is not a word of any labour or cost incurred in the collection of the documents.

3. The Roman Edition of 1587 is the first which professes to be directly based upon a single uncial codex. The words of Petrus Morinus in the *Praefatio ad lectorem* are explicit: "liber ipse ad litteram, quoad fieri potuit per antiquam orthographiam, aut per librarii lapsus, est expressus. nam vetus illa et iam obsoleta eius aetatis scriptura, aliquibus locis repraesentata non est; cum tamen in aliis omnibus, nisi ubi manifestus apparebat librarii lapsus, ne latum quidem unguem, ut aiunt, ab huius libri auctoritate discessum sit, ne in iis quidem, quae si minus mendo, certe suspicione mendi videbantur non carere." These assurances, supported by the authority of the Pope and the names of responsible editors, chief among whom was Cardinal A. Carafa, Librarian of the Vatican, seem to promise a satisfactory edition of the Vatican text; and it would be thankless to disparage labours which have yielded excellent fruit for three centuries. But it is not now contended that the Sixtine edition supplies a critical or even a wholly trustworthy representation of the great Vatican MS. The considerable *lacunae* of B in Genesis and in the Psalter and the whole of the first three books of the Maccabees are supplied from sources which the Sixtine Editors do not stop to identify, merely remarking: "haec ex aliorum codicum collatione emendata sunt." In the remainder of their work, where B supplies the text, there are few chapters in which they have not departed from the MS. upon points which cannot be referred to the correction of the scribe's orthography, or of his obvious blunders. A cursory comparison of the Roman Edition of 1587 with the Roman facsimile of 1869–81, or a glance at Dr E. Nestle's excellent collation, will enable the student to judge for himself. The corrections which were made by the Sixtine Editors with the pen before publication scarcely touch the fringe of this widespread and continual divergence from their archetype.

4. What the Sixtine Edition had endeavoured to do for the Codex Vaticanus the Oxford Press accomplished with better success for its great rival the Alexandrine MS. The four magnificent volumes which issued from the Sheldonian between 1707 and 1720 did not indeed profess to adhere exclusively to the text of Codex A. The title of the first volume sufficiently tells its tale: "Septuaginta interpretum tomus I. continens Octateuchum; quem ex antiquissimo MS. Codice Alexandrino accurate descriptum, et ope aliorum Exemplarium, ac priscorum Scriptorum, praesertim vero Hexaplaris Editionis Origenianae, emendatum atque suppletum, additis saepe asteriscorum et obelorum signis, summa cura edidit Joannes Ernestus Grabe S.T.P." For the accuracy of his collation of A the name of the Editor might have been considered a sufficient safeguard; but his work was to some extent verified by Humphrey Wanley, who attests its general excellence. With the Roman Editors Grabe regarded himself at liberty to depart freely from the orthography of the scribe, and to correct his blunders; but he has carefully noted the more important of these departures either in his prolegomena or in the margin of his pages. A comparison of his text with the recent autotype of the MS. yields but a small proportion of substantial readings which had altogether escaped the vigilance of Grabe. He makes no attempt however to distinguish the hands of the various correctors from each other or from the original scribe; nor does he notice the numerous erasures or the occasional *lacunae*. But the great blemish of his work, if it be considered as an edition of Codex A, lies in the endeavour to supply from external sources the deficiencies of the Alexandrine text. This is done in perfectly good faith, and every change of the kind is indicated by the use of the Origenic signs, or of a different type; yet the result remains that the Oxford Edition of the eighteenth century does not, as it stands, convey to the reader's eye a true representation of the MS. on which it is based. To obtain from it the testimony of Codex A, he must not only change much of the orthography, distinguish the hands of correctors, and occasionally revise the text; but he must strike out words verses and here and there whole paragraphs entirely foreign to his MS. and which in some cases have displaced its genuine reading.

It is no part of our plan to notice the numerous secondary editions which are founded more or less entirely upon one or other of these four primary printed texts. An exception however must be made in favour of two descendants of the Roman Edition, one of which supplies our fullest *apparatus criticus*, and the other the most carefully emended text.

*a*. The great work of R. Holmes and his *continuator* J. Parsons (Oxford, 1798–1827) offers in its text merely a reprint of the Sixtine edition in which even the obvious errors of the latter are not always corrected. But the vast stores which are accumulated in the textual notes promise materials upon which a critical revision of the text may ultimately be based. Unhappily this part of the work has proved to be of uncertain value. The use and arrangement of the materials leave something to be desired, and the materials themselves are far from being in all cases worthy of trust. It is not surprising that among so large a body of collators some should have been found careless or incompetent, whilst the printed texts of fathers and versions were at the beginning of the century (as indeed many of them are now) in a very unsatisfactory state. Still this vast undertaking will always remain not only a monument of scholarship and enterprise, but a storehouse of suggestive facts. No other edition affords or possibly will ever afford the student of the Greek Old Testament so wide an outlook over the whole field of documentary and patristic evidence. The verdict of Lagarde upon Holmes and Parsons is substantially just: "qui iudicium neque in seligendis laboris sodalibus neque in disponenda scripturarum sibi traditarum farragine probaverunt … satis multa in publicam lucem protulerunt, quibus adiutus verum inveniret qui verum sedulo quaereret."

*b*. The editions of Tischendorf proceed upon less ambitious lines, with results more directly satisfactory. Nearly fifty years have passed since the great editor of the N. T. turned his thoughts to an edition of the Septuagint. It was plain to him that the time had not come for the construction of a critical text; and he resolved upon a revision of the Sixtine text in which the obvious faults of the Roman work might be corrected, and its evidence balanced by variants from the three oldest MSS. which had then been edited (Codd. Alex., Friderico-Aug., Ephraemi). His first issue appeared in 1850; the second, with the full prolegomena and an appendix containing the Chigi Daniel, in 1856; other and enriched editions followed in 1860, 1869; a fifth edition was published in 1875, after Tischendorf's death. The work was subsequently entrusted to Dr E. Nestle, under whose care it reappeared in 1880, and again at the beginning of 1887. Dr Nestle added a *Supplementum editionum quae Sixtinam sequuntur omnium in primis Tischendorfianarum*—a nearly full and remarkably accurate collation of the Sixtine text with the facsimiles of ℵB, to which he subjoins the readings of AC, as collected from the British Museum autotype of the former and from Tischendorf's edition of the latter, wherever they support B or ℵ or both against the Sixtine text. The second edition of this Supplement (1887) turns to good account the information supplied by the concluding volume of the

Roman facsimile. Thus the tercentenary year of the great Edition of 1587 witnessed the collection of the materials available for its revision.

One other edition of the Septuagint remains to be mentioned, distinct in kind from any of the preceding. In an often cited passage of his preface to the Books of Chronicles Jerome reckons three recensions of the Septuagint which at the end of the fourth century divided the Christian world—the recension of Hesychius which prevailed at Alexandria and in Egypt; the recension of Lucian, accepted at Antioch and at Constantinople; the recension of Pamphilus and Eusebius of Caesarea, grounded on the work of Origen and followed in Palestine. Dr Paul de Lagarde saw that a comparative view of these recensions would be of the first importance to the critical reconstruction of the text. His *Librorum V. T. canonicorum pars prior Graece* (Gottingae, 1883) was the first instalment of an attempt to restore the Lucianic recension. His scheme included the recovery of the text of Hesychius and the printing of the two recensions on opposite pages with a collation of the fragments of the Hexaplaric Septuagint. The untimely death of this great scholar and indefatigable worker has for the time suspended the progress of the work, but every one will hope for the fulfilment of the triumphant prediction which concludes his preface to the text of Lucian: "verum vincet causa mea, et quae ego volui perficere, procul dubio perficientur aliquando."

The foregoing succinct account of the existing editions of the Septuagint which claim to be based more or less directly upon the testimony of its MSS. may suffice to justify the appearance of an accession to their ranks. There was still room for an edition which should endeavour to exhibit the text of one of the great uncial codices with a precision corresponding to our present knowledge, together with a full *apparatus* of the variants of the other MSS., or at least of those which have been critically edited. The need was still felt of a text which might serve as a satisfactory standard of comparison, accompanied by textual notes which would enable the student at a glance to compare with his text the results to be gleaned from sources of information already securely within our reach.

So far back as 1875 the necessity for such a work was represented to the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press by Dr Scrivener, who at the same time submitted a scheme for its accomplishment. Until the beginning of 1883 it was still hoped that the author of the scheme might have been able to devote to the work his ripe experience and unwearied energy. Increasing years and preoccupations compelled him at length to decline the editorship; and in the spring of the same year the present Editor was appointed to carry out Dr Scrivener's proposals in a slightly modified form, with the cooperation of a Committee nominated by the Syndics of the Press. The Committee continued to exercise a general superintendence during the progress of the work; and the Editor, while personally responsible for the execution of his task, desires heartily to acknowledge not only the value of its formal directions, but yet more the unfailing kindness with which his requests for counsel and assistance were met from time to time by individual members of that body. Without such sympathetic help, he is free to confess, he might at times have been tempted to abandon a work which, especially in its earlier stages, was beset by difficulties of no ordinary kind.

The plan ultimately adopted by the Syndics included the preparation of two editions with a common text. The text of the Vatican MS. was selected as that "which on the whole presents the version of the Septuagint in its relatively oldest form." Where the Vatican MS. is defective, its defects are supplied from the Alexandrine MS., or in the very few instances where both these MSS. fail us, from the uncial MS. which occupies the next place in point of age or importance. The editions will differ in the extent of the *apparatus criticus*. In the larger edition, which must necessarily be the labour of many years and of a variety of hands, "it is proposed to give the variations of all the Greek uncial MSS., of select Greek cursive MSS., of the more important versions, and of the quotations made by Philo and the earlier and more important ecclesiastical writers." The smaller or manual edition, of which the first volume is in the reader's hands, confines itself to the variations of a few of the most important uncial codices already edited in letterpress, facsimile, or photograph. Since the first step was to ascertain the common text and the next to compare with it the texts of these earliest and most accessible witnesses, it was possible to begin with the portable edition; and the urgent need of a revised text for ordinary use recommended this as the more convenient order.

It is necessary briefly to explain the arrangements which have been adopted in the manual edition with regard to orthography, accentuation, and the divisions of the text.

1. On the whole the orthography of the MS. upon which the text is based has been closely followed. Hence in Genesis 1:1–46:28 the spellings are mainly those of A; throughout the remainder of the volume B is responsible. A few inconsistencies result from this system; thus in Gen. 41:51, 46:20 the text gives Μαννασσή, according to the almost invariable spelling of A; but in Gen. 48:1, where B has taken the lead, Μανασσή. But serious divergences are rare; and since there must be more than one witness employed, it has seemed better to leave each MS. to tell its own tale in the way which it prefers.

Nor has it been thought desirable in all cases to reduce to an uniform orthography the text supplied by the same MS. It is premature to enter upon a detailed examination of the principles which direct the judgement in the acceptance or rejection of particular forms; and it is possible that not a few of the results to which the Editor has been led may be modified by further consideration. For the present it is enough to premise that the MS. or first hand of the MS. upon which the text is based has been followed in the spellings of all proper names and transliterations of Hebrew words, unless there was an obvious clerical error; in the assimilation or non-assimilation of consonants in compounded verbs and nouns; and for the most part also in the choice of a particular mode of spelling where two or more spellings are found in good MSS. or other ancient authorities. On the other hand the orthography of the MS. has not been represented in the printed text when it appeared to rest upon itacistic error or upon some habit inveterate in the scribe (as the ascertained tendency of the scribe or scribes of B to write ει for ι), or when its adoption would have involved repeated changes of a revolutionary kind unsuitable to the character of a manual edition (such as the continual use of γείνεσθαι and γεινώσκειν). The moveable ν final and the ς in οὕτως are printed or withheld in strict obedience to the MS. or its first hand.

2. Accentuation presents grave difficulties in the case of proper names transliterated from Hebrew forms or intended to represent them. Our oldest MSS. fail us here altogether; the testimony of the later MSS. is at once uncertain, and appears, except in isolated cases, to be of little value as a guide to any tradition but that by which grammarians strove to regulate the accents of ‘barbarous’ words. Under these circumstances Tischendorf contented himself with correcting the inconsistencies of the Sixtine Editors; whilst Lagarde, in his Lucianic text, has abandoned the accentuation of the proper names altogether, except in the case of a Greek termination. In the present edition, which is designed for ordinary use, some accentuation appeared desirable; on the other hand it was felt that the editor of an unaccentuated MS. was under no obligation to follow in these words the unsatisfactory method which has become conventional. It has therefore been decided to fall back upon the accentuation of the Massoretic text, which, whatever its age, may at least be taken to represent a real and to a great extent trustworthy tradition. The result will doubtless be startling at first sight, at all events in some familiar names; the eye will not immediately accustom itself to Βηθλέεμ, Ἐφράιμ, Γέσεμ, Κόρε, Χανάαν. But it is hoped that the change, which has been made at the cost of considerable labour, will not be unwelcome to those who use the Septuagint in connexion with the Hebrew Bible, nor altogether fruitless in calling attention to important distinctions which occasionally lurk under the use of an identical Greek form. It must not be concealed, however, that the application of this principle is difficult or even impracticable where the Septuagint version or the text of B is widely at issue with the Massoretic text, as often happens in the lists of names, or where an imaginary transliteration has grown out of a misreading of the Hebrew. In such cases it has sometimes become necessary to resort to the general rule which makes ‘barbarous’ words oxytone, or to retain the conventional accentuation. The results are therefore not entirely satisfactory; it must suffice if the step which has been taken is on the whole an approach to a sounder method of dealing with these anomalies.

The breathings of proper names, whether transliterated or made to assume a Greek form, have been brought into conformity with the system adopted by Dr. Westcott and Dr Hort in their edition of the Greek New Testament. Initial א and ע are represented by the *lenis*, ה and ח by the aspirate; words beginning with י uniformly receive the smooth breathing.

The first hand of B has not been followed in the very frequent use of ΟΥΧ ΙΔΟΥ, nor on the other hand in the almost equally common employment of οὐκ before certain words which begin with an aspirated vowel.

3. The Roman Editors of 1587 applied to their text the mediæval system of chapter-divisions, which, first employed in Latin Bibles of the thirteenth century, had been pressed into the service of the Hebrew Bible in the Concordance of R. Isaac Nathan about the middle of the fifteenth. On the other hand they declined to follow the example of R. Nathan in adding a

verse-numeration, although his system had been accepted by Pagninus in the Latin Bible of 1528 and imitated by Robert Stephen in the Greek New Testament of 1551.

In the present edition the Sixtine chapters are retained with a few exceptions which are noted in the margin of the text. The verse-numeration which became traditional in later editions is added; or where there is more than one tradition, that is preferred which agrees with the verse-divisions of the Massoretic text. Where the chapters or verses of the Hebrew Bible differ from those which are accepted in the Greek, the numbers of the Hebrew verses are placed in the margin within brackets, outside the numbers of the Greek, the text being usually in such cases indented to leave space for the double numeration. Finally, where the verse begins in the Hebrew at a different word from that at which it begins in the Greek, the beginning of the Hebrew verse is denoted by a bracketed numeral inserted in the Greek. Additional matter which is peculiar to the Greek text, unless already traditionally divided, has been provisionally broken up into verses by means of the letters of the Latin alphabet attached to the arabic numeral which marks the last preceding verse of the original. Omissions, when coextensive with a Hebrew verse, are marked by the dropping of a number in the verse-numeration of the Greek.

Besides the conventional division of the text into chapters and verses, retained for the convenience of reference, it has been thrown into paragraphs, subparagraphs and groups of paragraphs, with reference to the sense, the order of the narrative or the plan of the book. The commencement of a group of paragraphs, marking the beginning of a large or distinct section of a book, is denoted by the omission of an entire line of type; the commencement of a subparagraph, by a short break in the course of a line, and by the use of a capital letter to begin the first word. In these arrangements the Editor has been largely aided by the precedent of the Revised English Bible; and a further acknowledgement is due to the Old Testament Company for the indulgence by which he was permitted to obtain access to their method of paragraphing the first two or three Books at a time when the text of the revision was not yet out of the Revisers' hands. Their example has been also followed in the metrical form which has been given to poetical passages; although it has often been impossible to adhere to their arrangement of particular lines, the parallelisms having either disappeared in the Greek or having been replaced by others.

From the text it is time to turn to the textual notes. These will be found in this manual edition to contain (1) the more important clerical errors of the MS. on which the text is based, and the rejected readings of its various hands; and (2) the variants of other uncial MSS. selected for comparison with the text. This selection includes the other three great uncial Bibles; and thus at every opening the reader is presented with the entire evidence of B$\aleph$AC, so far as it is now accessible. In view of the lamentably defective condition of $\aleph$C and the serious *lacunae* of B it has been thought well to add the testimony of such other uncial MSS. as could be reached at once through photographs, facsimiles or trustworthy editions, excepting those which are merely fragmentary, and those which offer a Hexaplaric text. In Genesis, where for the greater part of the book B is wanting as well as $\aleph$ and C, we are fortunate in having three other important MSS. (DEF) which fulfil these conditions, one of which (F) goes on with us through the rest of the Pentateuch and to the middle of Joshua. From that point to the end of the volume only A is left to be compared with B; but its variants are here so numerous and important that the absence of other witnesses is less to be regretted than if it had occurred in the earlier Books.

The Appendix at the end of each volume is intended to receive such unsubstantial variants as seemed unworthy of a place at the foot of the text—errors of the scribe, frequently recurring itacisms, rejected spellings of an ordinary type, minute discrepancies between the MSS. and the printed text. But departures from the accepted orthography which appeared to possess any special interest or in words which are of rare occurrence in the Septuagint, and itacisms or apparent errors of the scribe under which a true variant may possibly lurk, or which are characteristic of the MS. or of its palæography, have been allowed to retain their place among the textual notes. Moreover, a rejected spelling has usually been exhibited at the foot of the page when it affects a word which for some other reason had found a place there, or when it occurs in the course of a substantial variant. In permitting these exceptions it has been difficult to be consistent, but care has been taken to secure that all the substantial variations are included in the textual notes, while on the other hand unimportant variations which have been given in the notes are not repeated in the Appendix. The use of the textual notes alone will enable the reader to judge of all questions which affect the text, so far as they are touched by the MSS. employed: the Appendix will, if he

chooses to refer to it, complete the testimony of the MSS. by adding their minuter disagreements with the standard of the printed text.

The letter exterior to the first line of text on each page is the symbol of the MS. upon which the text of that page is based. In the rare instances where the text of a single page is supplied partly by one MS. partly by another, the symbols of both MSS. are placed in this position side by side but enclosed in separate pairs of brackets.

Similarly, the letter or letters exterior to the first line of textual notes on each page must be taken to represent the MS. or MSS. from which variants have been collected for that page or for some part of it.

The point in the text at which any MS. begins or breaks off is marked by the sign § or ¶, which is repeated in the margin together with the symbol of the particular MS. When the beginning or the break occurs in the middle of a word, the first or last letter which the MS. exhibits is to be gathered from the textual notes. All the *lacunae* are noted in this way, as well as the starting point of each MS. and the place at which its testimony ceases altogether.

In distinguishing the 'hands', a 'superior' $^{1}$ has been used to denote corrections of the original scribe (*) by himself or by a contemporary whose writing is not distinguishable from his own; $^{a}$, $^{b}$, $^{c}$, are the second, third and fourth hands respectively; $^{ab}$ represents the testimony of the second hand confirmed by the third, whilst $^{a?\,b?}$ must be taken to mean that it is doubtful to which of the two the correction is to be assigned, and $^{a?b}$ implies that the correction is made certainly by the third hand, possibly also by the second. Of the two expressions $^{a\,(vid)}$, $^{a\,vid}$, the former is the symbol of a reading probably attributable to the second hand, the latter of one to which some uncertainty attaches, but which is due to the second hand if it be a *bona fide* correction at all.

It remains to add a brief description of the MSS. used for the text and notes of this volume, together with some account of the editions through which their contents have been reached.

### CODEX VATICANUS GR. 1209

Written in an uncial hand of the fourth century on leaves of the finest vellum made up in quires of five; the lines, which are of 16 to 18 letters, being arranged in three columns containing 42–44 lines each, excepting the poetical Books, where the lines being stichometrical the columns are only two. There are no initial letters, although the first letter of a section occasionally projects into the margin; no breathings or accents occur *prima manu*, the punctuation if by the first hand is rare and simple. Of the 759 leaves which compose the present quarto volume, 617 belong to the O. T. The first 31 leaves of the text of the original Codex have been torn away, and there are *lacunae* also at f. 178 (part of a leaf) and at f. 348 (10 leaves of the original missing); these gaps involve the loss of Gen. 1:1–46:28, 2 Kings 2:5–7, 10–13, Ps. 105:27–137:6; the missing passages in Gen. and Pss. have been supplied by a recent hand. The Prayer of Manasses and the Books of the Maccabees were never included in this Codex. The other Books are in the following order: Genesis to 2 Chron., Esdras 1, 2, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Job, Wisdom of Solomon, Wisdom of the son of Sirach, Esther, Judith, Tobit, Hosea and the other Minor Prophets to Malachi, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Baruch, Lamentations, and Ep. of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel (the version ascribed to Theodotion).

The great importance of this MS., now the chief glory of the Vatican Library, was recognized almost from the first; a description of the Codex was communicated to Erasmus in 1533, in which his attention was drawn both to its age and to the value of its text; the appreciative language in which it is described by the Sixtine Editors is all that can be desired. Yet no effort was made by its custodians to publish the actual text of the MS. before the present century. Within the last seventy years the work has been attempted thrice. The edition of Ang. Mai, printed between 1828 and 1838, appears to have been so little satisfactory to that great scholar himself that it did not see the light till after his death. Mai died in 1854; his five volumes appeared in 1857; introduced to the reader by the pen of C. Vercellone. But even under such auspices the work failed from the first to satisfy the requirements of Biblical criticism. "Forma editi longe apparet remota ab ea codicis pressissima forma, quam sequi A. Maium aliqui forte critici … concupivissent." Such is the candid admission of Mai's successors, who in 1881 brought to a completion the first endeavour to represent the MS. in facsimile type. Their work is entitled, *Bibliorum Sacrorum Graecus Codex Vaticanus*, and occupies six volumes of the same size and magnificence as Tischendorf's *Codex Sinaiticus*. This facsimile edition was undertaken by C. Vercellone and J. Cozza, but on the death of the former in 1869 before the publication of any part of the O. T., his place was filled by his pupil C. Sergio, who was in

turn succeeded by H. Fabiani assisted by two coadjustors U. Ubaldi and A. Rocchi; to the last three it appears we owe in great part the prolegomena and commentary which fill the concluding volume.

Even this splendid effort left much to be desired. But it is unnecessary and would be invidious to recount its imperfections here, because since 1890 the facsimile has been superseded by a photographic representation worthy of the Vatican Press and of the enlightened Pontiff under whose auspices it has been executed.

In preparing the first edition of this volume, during the years 1883–7, the Editor was dependent on the facsimile, and the reader was warned in the Preface that the results could not be regarded as final. The completion of the photograph rendered it possible satisfactorily to revise the text, and also the notes and Appendix, so far as they represented the evidence of Cod. B. This labour was generously undertaken by Dr Nestle, whose well-known accuracy is a guarantee of the soundness of his work. Dr Nestle's corrections of the text appeared in the *corrigenda* appended to Vol. III.; the whole of his results will be found embodied in the present edition.

Tischendorf believed himself able to distinguish the hands of three original scribes in the Vatican MS.; and Dr E. Abbot found internal evidence that the first terminated his labours at f. 167 (ending with 1 Kings 19:11), the second at f. 312 (the end of 2 Esdras). The Editors of the facsimile refuse to decide whether the text is due to one scribe or to many, contenting themselves with the statement that the writing is so uniform as to convince them that it proceeded from a single school if not from a single hand. To the original scribe or scribes they assign a certain number of changes made *inter scribendum*, which they denote as $B^1$. Under the second hand ($B^2 = B^a$ in this edition) they include a series of corrections, beginning with a possible *diorthota* who may have been nearly coæval with the scribe, and reaching in their judgement to the fourteenth century. Their third hand ($B^3 = B^b$) is an *instaurator* who has corrected the whole text, retracing every letter which he wished to retain. He is identified by the Editors with the monk Clement who has scrawled his name in characters of the fourteenth or fifteenth century at the end of the Pentateuch and of 2 Esdras (pp. 238, 624). Lastly, a few corrections are ascribed to a fourth hand ($B^4 = B^c$), later than the fifteenth century.

It is impossible to escape from provisionally accepting this grouping of the hands of B, and equally impossible to accept it without mistrust. The identification of Clement the monk with the *instaurator* seems to rest on very slender grounds; and the judgement of Tischendorf, who placed the latter in the tenth or eleventh century, is scarcely to be set aside by the discovery on which Fabiani and his colleagues so warmly congratulate themselves. Again, it does not appear that the Codex was touched, in the N. T. at all events, by any corrector between the *diorthota* and the *instaurator*. If this conclusion is well founded and may be extended to the O. T. portion of the MS., the second hand will be little later than the first, whilst the third follows after a lapse of six centuries. But according to our Roman guides $B^{2=a}$ covers the corrections of a thousand years, and is often barely distinguishable from $B^{3=b}$, in their judgement a hand of the fourteenth or fifteenth century. The whole question demands a fresh investigation, which can only be successful if conducted by experts with free access to the MS. itself.

The Editors of the Codex do not profess to have always noted the orthographical variations of their third hand. These however have been carefully indicated in Dr Nestle's revision from the photograph, and now appear in the Appendix, the plates of which have been recast in order to admit the new evidence under this head.

CODEX SINAITICUS (= Codd. Friderico-Augustanus, Sinaiticus Petropolitanus)

Written in an uncial hand ascribed to the middle of the fourth century, and in lines which when complete contain from 12 to 14 letters and which are arranged in four columns on unusually large leaves of a very fine vellum, made from the skin of the ass or of the antelope. The leaves are gathered into quires of four, excepting two which contain five. There are no breathings or accents; a simple point is occasionally used. In the N. T. the MS. is complete; of the O. T. the following portions remain: fragments of Gen. 23, 24 and of Numbers 5, 6, 7; 1 Chron. 9:27–19:17, 2 Esdras 9:9 to end, Esther, Tobit, Judith, 1 Macc., 4 Macc., Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lam. 1:1–2:20, Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Wisdom of Solomon, Wisdom of the son of Sirach, Job.

The recent history of this MS. is too well known to need repetition. The fragments of the O. T. have been edited by Tischendorf in the following books: (1) *Codex Friderico-Augustanus* (Lips. 1846)—a lithographed facsimile of the 43 leaves

which Tischendorf rescued during his visit to S. Catharine's in 1844. These leaves contain 1 Chronicles 11:22–19:17, 2 Esdras 9:9 to end, Esther, Tobit 1:1–2:2, Jeremiah 10:25 to end, Lam. 1:1–2:20. (2) *Monumenta sacra ined. nov. coll.* vol. 1. (Lips. 1855), pp. xxxx. 213–216—a facsimile of Isaiah 66:12–Jer. 1:7, a page copied from the MS. during the same visit; afterwards edited again with the rest of the MS. (*infra*, 4). (3) *Monumenta*, &c., vol. 2. (Lips. 1857), pp. xxxxvi. 321—a facsimile of Gen. 24:9–10, 41–43, from a scrap discovered by Tischendorf at S. Catharine's in 1853; reedited in the *Appendix Codd.* (*infra*, 5). (4) *Bibliorum Codex Sinaiticus Petropolitanus* (Petrop. 1862), vol. 1. (prolegg., comment., pp. i–xxx) ii., iii.—a facsimile of the S. Petersburg portion of the Codex, containing all that survives of ℵ except the fragments of Genesis and Numbers and the leaves previously edited under the name of the Cod. Friderico-Augustanus. (5) *Appendix codicum celeberr. Sinaitici Vaticani Alexandrini* (Lips. 1867). The Sinaitic fragments consist of the scraps of Gen. 23–24, Numb. 5–7, which, with the exception of Gen. 24:9–10, 41–43, already accounted for, were discovered by the Archimandrite (afterwards Bishop) Porphyry in the bindings of other Sinaitic MSS. and brought by him to Europe in 1845, but first communicated to Tischendorf in 1862, after the publication of the Cod. Sinaiticus Petropolitanus. The condition of these fragments is very unsatisfactory. The Porphyrian fragments of Genesis form the major part of a single leaf, but so torn that the exterior column of each page yields only 23 or 24 letters, whilst from 14 to 19 of the lines at the lower end of each column are lost; the remainder is injured by damp and difficult to decipher. Those of Numbers were coated with dirt where the margin had been sewn into the back of the book which the leaf was used to bind, and the writing is in places nearly illegible.

In the text of ℵ Tischendorf distinguishes the hands of four original scribes. To one (A), who wrote nearly the whole of the N. T., he assigns the fragments of Genesis and of 1 Chronicles, 1 Maccabees, and the last 4½ leaves of 4 Maccabees; to a second (B), the fragments of Numbers and the Prophets; to a third (C), the poetical Books; whilst to the fourth (D) are adjudged the Books of Tobit and Judith, and the rest of 4 Maccabees and of the N. T. More important to us is his judgement with regard to the hands of correctors. In the text of the LXX. he finds five such, who are designated $\aleph^{a}$, $\aleph^{c.a}$, $\aleph^{c.b}$, $\aleph^{c.c}$, $\aleph^{d}$. The first symbol ($\aleph^{a}$) includes such nearly contemporary hands as differ but slightly from the hand of the original scribe. The second and third ($\aleph^{c.a}$, $\aleph^{c.b}$) are correctors of the seventh century, and throughout the MS., more especially in the O. T., are the prevailing hands; the former stands alone in the poetical Books, the latter predominates in the Prophets. $\aleph^{c.c}$, also of the seventh century, has made a special study of Job, often correcting $\aleph^{c.a}$ in that Book; the MS. appears to have been in his custody for a considerable time, and he has enriched it with frequent marginal notes such as the exclamation ὡραῖον, and the sectional letters in Isaiah. $\aleph^{d}$ (viii.? ix.?) has retraced many pages in the Prophets and here and there attempted an emendation of the text. To this corrector are also assigned certain marginal notes in Arabic.

CODEX ALEXANDRINUS, Brit. Mus. Royal MS. 1 D. v–viii

Written in an uncial hand of the middle of the fifth century on vellum of fine texture originally arranged in quires of eight leaves, occasionally (but chiefly at the end of a Book) of less than eight; three or four and twenty letters go to a line, 50 or 51 lines usually compose a column, and there are two columns on a page. Large initial letters, standing in the margin, announce the commencement of a paragraph or section, excepting in vol. III., which appears to be the work of another scribe. There are no breathings or accents added by the first hand; the punctuation, more frequent than in B, is still confined to a single point. The three vols. which contain the O. T. now consist of 630 leaves. Of these vols. only nine leaves are lost and five mutilated. The portions of the Septuagint which are thus deficient in A contained Gen. 14:14–17, 15:1–5, 16–19, 16:6–9; 1 Kings 12:19–14:9; Ps. 49:19–79:10. The Codex opens (1., f. 3) with a Table of the Books written in uncial letters somewhat later than the body of the MS. The first volume contains the Octateuch with Kings and Chronicles (ομου βιβλια ϛ̄). The Books of Chronicles are followed (vol. II.) by the Prophets (προφηται ις̄) Minor and Major, Jeremiah including Baruch, Lamentations and the Epistle; Daniel (Theodotion's version) is succeeded by Esther, Tobit, Judith, Esdras 1, 2, and the four Books of Maccabees. The third volume contains the Psalter, with Ps. 151, and the canticles, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon, the Wisdom of Solomon, and the Wisdom of the

son of Sirach. The Table shews that the Psalms of Solomon once occupied a place at the end of the fourth volume which contains the N.T.

This MS., the treasured possession of the Patriarchs of Alexandria from at least the end of the thirteenth century, and since the beginning of the seventeenth the pride of its English custodians, is the most perfect of the great codices which contain the Septuagint. Moreover it has fared better than the earlier Vatican Codex in regard to the attention it has received from its editors. Early in the eighteenth century the volumes which contain the O. T. were already accessible, as we have seen, in the scholarly edition of Grabe. Early in the nineteenth, they were published at the cost of the nation in facsimile with a copious commentary by H. H. Baber, Librarian of the British Museum. Lastly, a magnificent edition in autotype has been completed within the last four years under the superintendence of Mr E. Maunde Thompson. Yet the Ms. still needs a critical editor to do for it what Tischendorf has done for the Codex Sinaiticus. The autotype edition is without a critical commentary, and the plates do not distinctly reveal the erasures in every case, or enable the student clearly to discriminate the hands—an imperfection of photographic representation which the utmost care and skill cannot altogether surmount. On the other hand the copious commentary which fills Baber's last volume is unhappily to a great extent inadequate. In fact no satisfactory attempt has yet been made to distinguish accurately the various correctors, who have changed so large a portion of the face of the Codex. Baber indeed discriminates between the first and second hands, and a third hand which he calls recent; but in a large number of cases he falls back upon some such ambiguous designation as *manus vetusta, vetustissima, pervetusta, antiqua*. A cursory examination of the MS. has served to shew that in the places opened his second hand was usually (not quite uniformly) but a little later than the scribe himself; whilst his 'ancient' or 'very ancient' hand has the appearance of belonging to the following century, the writing being thin and fine, and the characters long. It is evident that there is room for an entirely new handling of this subject, and there is reason to hope that this will have been accomplished by a competent scholar before the larger edition of the Cambridge Septuagint has passed through the press. In the present edition, which has been constructed on the principle of using the best editions already accessible, it has been necessary to be content with the autotype text and Baber's commentary. Baber's second hand has been represented by $A^{a}$; his 'ancient' or 'very ancient' hand, when not identified with the second as occasionally it is, by $A^{a?}$; his third hand is our $A^{b}$.

CODEX COTTONIANUS GENESEOS, Brit. Mus. Cotton MS. Otho B. VI

The remains of this MS. of the fifth or sixth century now consist of 150 fragments inlaid in 147 leaves of 10¾×8¾ inches, in size nearly corresponding to the leaves of the original Codex. The vellum is moderately fine, the characters are uncials, round or square after the type of good uncial MSS.; 23 to 30 letters made a line, and a single column of 26 to 28 lines filled a page, excepting where the writing was partly displaced by an illustration. The MS. is said to have possessed 250 miniatures; traces of a few remain. Unlike B א A it has large initial letters; and the position of the single point used in punctuation is threefold, sometimes at the foot of the letters, sometimes at their head, and sometimes half-way up. There are neither accents nor breathings. Before the fire which wrecked this exquisite book it consisted of 165 (others say 166) leaves; but the Codex was even then far from perfect. The beginning and end of Genesis (1:1–13, 50:26) were wanting, and leaves had disappeared in several places. These *lacunae* are noted in the margin of our text.

This MS. has a singular history. Presented to Henry VIII. by two Greek Bishops who are said to have brought it from Philippi, it was given by Elizabeth to Sir John Fortescue, by whom it was subsequently placed in the collection of Sir R. Cotton. Lent by Sir Richard to Lord Arundel in 1630, it fell into other hands, but was ultimately secured again for the Cotton Library by Sir John Cotton. In 1700 the Library became national property, and the safety of the MS. might have seemed thenceforth secured. Unhappily it was removed with the rest of the collection to Ashburnham House, and reduced to charred fragments by the fire which attacked the treasures of that establishment Oct. 23, 1731. Dr H. Owen writing in 1778 speaks of the fragments as hopelessly lost; but the Cottonian catalogue of 1802 mentions 18 of them as still preserved at the British Museum, to which the Cotton library had meanwhile been transferred; and further search has largely added to this number. The scraps were collected with scrupulous care in 1847–8. Three or four other fragments have been discovered at the Bristol Baptist College, to which they were bequeathed by Dr A. Gifford, a London Baptist minister who had been officially connected with the department of MSS. at the British Museum.

Fortunately our knowledge of this Codex is not confined to what may be gathered from the relics of the Ashburnham fire. The following sources of information have been used for this edition: (1) *Collatio cod. Cotton. Geneseos cum Editione*

*Romana, a v. cl. F. E. Grabe iam olim facta; nunc demum summa cum cura edita ab H. Owen, M.D., S.R.S., eccl. S. Olai Rectore* (Londini, 1778). Grabe's MS. is still in the Bodleian, and upon being compared with Owen's tract seems to justify the claim which the latter makes to careful editing; whilst it is no surprise to find that a recent examination of Grabe's own work in the light of the surviving fragments has led Dr Gotch to pronounce it extremely accurate. This collation places within our reach the entire MS. as it existed before the fire; but a great part of the evidence is of course merely *e silentio*, and much of that which is direct can no longer be verified. Its testimony has therefore been distinguished from that of the surviving fragments by the use of an italic capital (*D*, $D^{sil}$). (2) *Vetusta monumenta quae ... Soc. Antiq. Lond. sumptu suo edenda curavit*, vol. 1. (Lond. 1747), p. lxvii f. This book contains two plates representing certain of the fragments of D, reproduced for the sake of the miniatures, but carrying with them portions of the text. The verses delineated are Gen. **5:25–29, 8:10, 11**, 9:15–23, 11:9, 12, 13, 13–17, 29–32, 12:1–6, 14:13–16, 15:1–12, 13–17, 18–16:5, 16:5–15, **18:15**, 19:4–11, **40:19–20, 43:12–13, 29–30.** The transcription has been executed with singularly little skill; but in the few places where the fragments have since disappeared (indicated above by the use of thicker numerals) the help which is thus given suffices for the recovery of the missing text. (3) *Monumenta sacra ined. nov. coll.* vol. II. (Lips. 1857) pp. xxii–xxxvi. 95–176. Under the title of *reliquiae ex incendio ereptae* this volume offers Tischendorf's reading of the British Museum fragments of D, with full prolegomena and with a commentary into which he works Grabe's collation, comparing it with the existing scraps. No one who has examined the brown and shrivelled relics on many of which at first sight scarcely a letter is distinguishable can fail to wonder at the relative success attained by Tischendorf's patience and skill. But he was compelled to leave some of the smaller fragments unidentified, and here and there a further examination has revealed a flaw in his transcription. These defects are now supplied in (4) F. W. Gotch's *Supplement to Tischendorf's Reliquiae* (London, 1881). Dr Gotch, who at the time when his book was published held the office of President of the Baptist College, Bristol, adds the Bristol fragments (Gen. 14:13–16, 15:1–12, 16:5–15, 19:4–11); the last two are given in photograph. Lastly, M. Omont has published in the *Mémoires de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France* (liii. pp. 163 ff.) a few fragments discovered in the Bibliothèque Nationale (Gen. 1:13, 14, 18:24–26, 43:16). We are thus at length in possession of probably all that can now be recovered of the Cotton Genesis; and the results, which go far to repair the damage of the fire, are a signal testimony to the sagacity and persevering toil of many labourers.

The discrimination of the 'hands' of D is necessarily beset with difficulty. Grabe found that the MS. had been collated and corrected throughout by either the scribe or a contemporary *diorthota* ($D^1$), to whom he attributes occasional marginal additions which have now disappeared. More frequently the corrections belong in his judgement to a later hand, which Tischendorf attributes to the eighth century ($D^a$). To $D^a$ seems to be due the retracing of the letters which had been faded by age. Lastly, Grabe mentions a *manus recentissima*, which has been distinguished as $D^b$.

A fresh collation of D and *D* has been made for this edition by Mr C. I. Beard, M.B., who has expended much time and labour in the effort to attain to perfect accuracy. His results, so far as they lie within the scope of a manual edition, have been worked into the plates and appear in the notes.

CODEX BODLEIANUS GENESEOS. Bodl. Auct. T. infr. II. I

Written probably towards the end of the ninth or the beginning of the tenth century in oblong sloping uncial characters upon 29 leaves of stout vellum, two columns occupying each page. Breathings and accents are frequent, abbreviations numerous; the punctuation includes the double point, the comma and the mark of interrogation. On the other hand, the orthography of the more ancient MSS. is maintained, and forms known as Alexandrian abound. There are *lacunae*, and the following passages are missing: Gen. 14:7–18:24, 20:14–24:54, and the last 7½ chapters (from 43:14 to the end).

The Bodleian Genesis was brought 'from the East' in 1853 by Tischendorf, who is reticent as to the exact locality where it was discovered; subsequently it was acquired by the Bodleian Library. It has been edited with prolegomena in *Monumenta sacra ined.* vol. II. (pp. xxxvi–xxxxii, 179–308) 3. The lateness of the MS. is counterbalanced in Tischendorf's judgement by the excellence of the text, which appears to represent a good and early archetype. Its value is enhanced by the scarcity of uncial MSS. of Genesis, and their generally defective condition; of the eight which survive, two only (as Tischendorf points out) have preserved more of the text than E.

Besides corrections by the original scribe, which are occasionally discriminated and are denoted $E^1$, Tischendorf notices others which are nearly coæval ($E^a$), and a third group proceeding from a later hand ($E^b$).

Another leaf of this MS. was discovered in 1891 among some fragments purchased from Tischendorf's representatives by the Syndics of the Cambridge University Library (*Academy*, June 6, 1891). This leaf carries the text down to Gen. 43:13. The *verso* is written in a cursive hand, but Mr Rendel Harris regards the cursive page as contemporary with the other, and possibly the work of the same scribe. Variants from the cursive portion of this fragment (Gen. 42:31–43:13) are distinguished by the use of an italic (*E*).

A fresh collation of Tischendorf's facsimile of E has been made by Dr Beard for the present edition. His corrections and additions have been embodied in the notes and Appendix.

CODEX AMBROSIANUS. Biblioth. Ambros. Mediol. A 147 infr.

Written in broad and laterally thick characters, of the type usual in MSS. assigned to the fourth and fifth centuries, on the thinnest whitest and smoothest vellum, the leaves of which are gathered in quires of four and numbered on the first and last page of each quire; there are three columns on each page, with 35 lines in each column. Initial letters are used, projecting slightly into the margin. The MS. has not only a frequent and varied punctuation, but stands alone amongst early uncial codices in exhibiting breathings and accents *prima manu*. The margins, both lateral and intercolumnar, are unusually broad, suggesting that the scribe contemplated the addition of marginal readings, some of which are in fact written by the first hand. The Codex now begins at Gen. 31:15 and ends with Joshua 12:12; there are numerous *lacunae*, the Book of Numbers being along complete. The *lacunae* from Exod. 30:29 are almost invariably supplied by later hands.

An unknown hand on a blank page bound up with the MS. is responsible for the statement that this remarkable Codex originally came from Macedonia, and was bought in Corcyra by Card. F. Borromeo (1561–1631), the founder of the Ambrosian Library. It was cursorily examined by Montfaucon, who noticed the presence of accents *prima manu*; and it was collated, but with lamentable want of care, for Holmes, by whom it is briefly described. A discovery of the defects of Holmes's collation has led Dr A. Ceriani to publish the MS. *in extenso* in the third volume of his *Monumenta sacra et profana* (Mediol., 1864). His edition is not in facsimile, and the exigencies of his type have compelled him to print in full the *compendia scripturae*; complete prolegomena and all corrections later than the first hand are moreover postponed to a fourth volume of the *Monumenta* which is still a desideratum. But the provisional preface, a considerable introduction of fifteen closely packed pages, supplies nearly everything which is necessary for present use. The character of the text is but lightly touched; but the Editor remarks its frequent agreement with A as against B. Ceriani supports the relative antiquity of the Codex, notwithstanding the presence of breathings and accents, and is disposed to place it not later than the first half of the fifth century. He supposes two scribes, to one of whom he assigns the Pentateuch, to the other the fragment of Joshua. A change in the colour of the ink, which is yellow in the earlier books, but green in Joshua, marks the transition. On the other hand the continuous numeration of the quires, in the hand of the penman of the Pentateuch, suggests that the scribes were not only contemporary, but associated in their work.

All the corrections which Dr Ceriani has printed are of the first hand ($A = F^1$), as he has kindly informed the present Editor. These have all been worked into the notes or the Appendix, excepting fragments of the other Greek versions, which are foreign to the purpose of a manual edition of the Septuagint, and may be found in Dr Field's Hexapla. A large number of corrections additions and scholia in later hands had been communicated to Dr Field by Ceriani (*Hexapla*, 1. p. 5), and permission was liberally given to use these for the present edition. Dr Field's lamented death intervened, and it was impossible to trace the papers which contained these variants. A portion of them however had been incorporated in the *Hexapla*, and any of these which were available have been copied into the notes, where they appear under the symbol $F^a$. In preparing a second edition the Editor had the advantage of consulting a list of corrections and additions which were kindly communicated to him by Dr Ceriani in 1888; in the present edition he has derived further assistance from a fresh collation of the MS. made by Mr N. $M^c$ Lean for the Larger Cambridge Septuagint.

In conclusion the Editor desires to offer his sincere thanks to all who have cooperated with him in the endeavour to render this reissue of Vol. 1. more accurate and serviceable than the first edition. His acknowledgements are especially due to Mr Redpath, the Editor of the Oxford Concordance to the Septuagint, whose vigilance will, as he trusts, have left few

superficial errors for future correction. To the officers and workmen of the Press he owes a not less hearty recognition of the care and assiduity with which they have accomplished the difficult task of correcting the plates.

In this fourth edition the punctuation of the text as far as the end of Leviticus has been made to correspond in all important particulars with that of the larger Cambridge Septuagint, and the notes have been corrected from the same source. For these improvements the thanks of the reader are due to the Editors of the larger work, and to Mr E. J. Thomas, who has made the necessary changes.

## Introduction to Volume 2

THE first volume of this manual edition of the Cambridge Septuagint was prefaced by a brief sketch of its history and plan. In publishing a second volume it will suffice to call attention to fresh details. Some of these have been treated in the introduction to a separate issue of the Psalter; but as the *Psalms in Greek* may escape the notice of readers who use the complete edition, such anticipations of the present volume are reprinted here together with other particulars which belong to its contents.

1. It is well known that the ninth and tenth Psalms of the Hebrew Bible form a single Psalm in the Greek of the Septuagint, and that this is also the case with the Hebrew Psalms 114, 115. On the other hand each of the Hebrew Psalms 116, 147, falls into two Psalms in the Greek. Consequently, there is a double numeration of the Psalms from 9:22 to 146:11 (Gk); and in the particular Psalms which are differently divided, there is also to some extent a double numeration of the verses. In this edition the 'Hebrew' numbers are added to the 'Greek' and distinguished from the latter by being enclosed in brackets.

The Psalter has been broken up into its five books—a division which though not directly recognised in the Greek MSS. is sufficiently marked by the doxologies with which the first four conclude. The twenty-two stanzas of Psalm 118 (= 119) are parted by slight breaks in the type. A smaller type has been employed throughout the Psalms to distinguish the titles and the διάψαλμα.

In all the MSS. which have been used for this edition, excepting the London papyrus fragments, the Psalms are written 'stichometrically,' the στίχοι usually corresponding or being intended to correspond to the members of the Hebrew parallelisms. This arrangement has been followed in the text; the second line of each couplet (and where the parallelism forms a triplet, the third line) having been thrown slightly back to mark its subordination to the first. The several MSS. differ however both as to the number of the lines and occasionally also as to the grouping of the words, and these variations have been recorded in the notes. The division of lines in the text is generally conformed to that in the MS. which it represents; but in Ps. 118 (= 119), where ℵ throws the majority of the verses into single lines, it has been thought better to adhere to the usual division. Similar arrangements have been adopted in the other Books which are written στιχηδόν, viz.: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Job, and the two Wisdoms.

2. It has been found inexpedient to exhibit in the text the numbered sections into which the Books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Canticles are divided, apparently by the first hand, in B, and the last two less thoroughly in ℵ; and the effect of admitting these numbers into the foot-notes would have been to overcrowd and confuse the latter. A table shewing the verse or word in a verse at which each of the sections begins will be found below; their purpose and method is an interesting problem, but one upon which this is not the place to enter.

3. In the non-canonical books of this volume and in the extra-canonical portions of Esther, where there is either no Hebrew original, or none now known to exist, the secondary verse-numeration is that of the Latin Bible. The Latin verses often differ so seriously from the Greek, as well in their numbering and position as in the character of their text, that comparison becomes tedious and difficult; and it is hoped that the method which has been adopted may be found serviceable by students both of the LXX. and the Vulgate. In some cases the correspondence is doubtful; in many it extends to a part of a verse only. When the Latin stops short in the middle of a Greek verse, a short hyphen in the margin indicates the inferior limit of the former.

4. A remarkable divergence in the arrangement of the Septuagint and Old Latin versions of Ecclesiasticus 30–36 calls for notice here. In these chapters the Greek order fails to yield a natural sequence, whereas the Latin arrangement, which is also that of the Syriac and Armenian versions, makes excellent sense. Two sections, c. 30:25–33:13[a] (ὡς καλαμώμενος … φυλὰς Ἰακώβ) and c. 33:13[b]–36:16[a] (λαμπρὰ καρδία … ἔσχατος ἠγρύπνησα), have exchanged places in the Latin, and the change is justified by the result. On examination it appears that these sections are nearly equal, containing in B 154 and 159 στίχοι respectively, whilst ℵ exhibits 160 in each. There can be little doubt that in the *exemplar* from which, so far as is certainly known, all our Greek MSS. of this book are ultimately derived the pairs of leaves on which these sections were severally written had been transposed, whereas the Latin translator, working from a MS. in which the transposition had not taken place, has preserved the true order. Under the circumstances it has been judged best to follow the guidance of the Latin, regarding it as the representative of a Greek text earlier in this particular than that which is known to us through our existing MSS.

5. The Greek additions to the Book of Esther are distinguished from the chapters of the Hebrew text by successive letters of the alphabet, and divided into verses which agree in length, although not in numeration, with those of the corresponding Latin.

6. In the Book of Tobit the text of ℵ differs so materially from the text of either B or A that it was found inconvenient to display its variants in the *apparatus criticus*. The Sinaitic Tobit has therefore been printed *in extenso* beneath the Vatican text, but in a smaller type, to denote its secondary character. To assist comparison it has been divided into verses corresponding as nearly as possible with those of the standard text.

The published texts of seven MSS. have been collated for the present volume. Three of these (BℵA) are described in the first volume; a few particulars must be added here.

### Codex Vaticanus

This MS. continues to supply the text of the edition wherever it is available. In the Psalter ten leaves of the original Codex have been lost, and the missing portion is supplied in the manuscript by the same recent cursive hand by which the *prima manus* has been replaced in the gaps of Genesis and 2 Kings. In Genesis the text of A was in this edition installed into the place vacated by the first hand of B; in the Psalms the text of ℵ is the natural substitute.

### Codex Sinaiticus (including Cod. Friderico-Augustanus)

According to Tischendorf the poetical books in ℵ are the work of the third of its four scribes, whom he distinguishes as C. Of the numerous correctors who have dealt with the text of ℵ, the second, ℵ$^{c.a}$, a hand of the seventh century, has been everywhere active in these Books. His corrections have not unfrequently been erased or otherwise set aside either by himself, or by a subsequent reviser, who is not identified. In the notes to the Psalms the symbol ℵ$^{c.b}$ has been employed for the corrector of ℵ$^{c.a}$; but it is necessary to apprise the reader that Tischendorf has elsewhere employed this expression for another hand of the seventh century to which he denies any part in the correction of the poetical books. In the remaining books of this class the ambiguity has been avoided by another method of notation.

### Codex Alexandrinus

The scribe of the third volume of the Codex Alexandrinus derived his text from a liturgical Psalter, and from it introduced into this great Bible of the fifth century a quantity of foreign matter relating to the Psalms. They are preceded in A by the Epistle of S. Athanasius to Marcellinus (ff. 525 *r*–530 *r*), the Argument of Eusebius Pamphili, a table of the contents of the

Psalms, apparently due to the same author, and canons of the Psalms for day and night use (ff. 531*r*–532*v*). After the Psalms, to which the ψαλμὸς ἰδιόγραφος is appended as the 151st, fourteen Canticles occur in the following order: Exod. 15:1–19 (ᾠδὴ Μωυσέως ἐν τῇ Ἐξόδῳ), Deut. 32:1–43 (ᾠδὴ Μωυσέως ἐν τῷ Δευτερονομίῳ), 1 Reg. 2:1–10 (προσευχὴ Ἄννας μητρὸς Σαμουήλ), Esa. 26:9–20 (προσευχὴ Ἐζεκίου [sic]), Ion. 2:3–10 (προσευχὴ Ἰωνᾶ), Hab. 3:1–19 (προσευχὴ Ἀμβακούμ), Esa. 38:10–20 (προσευχὴ Ἐζεκίου), the Prayer of Manasseh, Dan. 3:23 [2–21, Tisch.] (προσευχὴ Ἀζαρίου), Dan. 3:23 [28–65] (ὕμνος τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν), *Magnificat* (προσευχὴ Μαρίας τῆς θεοτόκου), *Nunc dimittis* (προσευχὴ Συμεών), *Benedictus* (προσευχὴ Ζαχαρίου), the Morning Hymn (ὕμνος ἑωθινός); the subscription being ΩΔΑΙ ΙΔ.

Nine leaves of the Psalter are missing in A, with a corresponding loss in its text of Pss. 49:19–79:10.

For the *apparatus criticus* of the Psalms it has been thought desirable to employ the testimony of three other uncial MSS. The first two, like the archetype of A, were liturgical Psalters; the third consists of fragments of the first book which, if not of very early date, appear to preserve an early text. Each of these MSS. possesses features of singular interest.

### Psalterium Graeco-Latinum Veronense

A bilingual Psalter of Western origin and attributed to the 6th century, in quarto, exhibiting at each opening the Greek text in Latin letters on the left-hand page and on the right a Latin version which is in the main Old Latin. The MS. is without punctuation, but written στιχηρῶς. It consists of 405 leaves of vellum, measuring 10½ inches by 7½, and arranged in quires of eight; 26 lines fill a page. A few portions of the Psalms (1:1–2:7, 65:20–68:3, 68:26–33, 105:43–106:2) have been replaced or supplied by a hand of the tenth century, to which the corrections throughout the MS. are generally due. The ψαλμὸς ἰδιόγραφος seems to have had no place in this Psalter *prima manu*; it is added in Greek and Latin by the later hand. The Canticles on the other hand appear to be in the first hand and are without correction. Eight Canticles are given in the following order: Exod. 15:1–21, Deut. 32:1–44, 1 Reg. 2:1–10, Esa. 5:1–9, Ion. 2:3–10, Hab. 3:1–19, *Magnificat*, Dan. 3:23 [27–67].

This Psalter, which is the property of the Chapter of Verona, was published by Giuseppe Bianchini, a native and at one time a Canon of Verona, in his *Vindiciae canonicarum scripturarum* (tom. i., Romae, 1740). A copper-plate facsimile of Ps. 142:1–6 precedes his text, which is followed by a too brief description of the MS. and of the editor's manner of dealing with its contents. A specimen of the handwriting may also be seen in the *Nouveau traité de diplomatique*.

In the use of this MS. the transliteration of the Greek text into Latin letters creates frequent ambiguities, and these are increased by Bianchini's somewhat uncertain practice with regard to the orthography. A photograph of the Verona Psalter is much to be desired. Meanwhile the present Editor has been permitted to use a collation of this MS. made by the Rev. H. A. Redpath, whilst the Canticles were also collated by himself during a short visit to Verona in 1894. He has however thought it inexpedient to introduce at present any but the more important corrections thus obtained, nor has it seemed desirable to load the notes with new readings of $R^a$ and $R^b$, the second and third correctors, or the Appendix with the strange spellings due partly to the exigencies of transliteration, partly to the ignorance of Western scribes.

The Verona MS. was not used by Parsons, nor does it seem to have taken its place hitherto in any *apparatus criticus* of the Greek Psalms except that which is contained in Lagarde's *Specimen*, where it is used for Ps. 1–5. Its claims are however asserted by Tischendorf, who accords it a high place among the "egregia novae editionis subsidia."

### Psalterium purpureum Turicense

A quarto volume bound in hog's skin, written in uncials on vellum of the thinnest sort dyed purple. The characters are of silver, gold and vermilion, silver being used for the text, gold for the numbers titles and initial letters of the Psalms, and vermilion for the Latin renderings of the first few words of each verse which are inscribed in the ample margin. There are no accents or breathings, but *compendia scribendi* are frequent, and some of them such as do not occur in the earliest MSS. There is no punctuation properly so called, but a double point resembling a semicolon is used to mark the commencement of a verse when it falls in the course of a line. When perfect this MS. contained the Psalms, followed by the Canticles. Of the 223 leaves which remain 209 are occupied by the Psalms; the quire marks shew that they originally filled 288. The following Psalms and portions of Psalms are missing: Pss. 1–25; 30:2–36:20; 41:6–43:3; 58:14–59:5; 59:9–10; 59:13–60:1; 64:12–71:4; 92:3–93:7; 96:12–97:8. The Canticles have also suffered loss: the first five have entirely disappeared, with parts of the sixth. The remaining portion includes 1 Reg. 2:6–10, (ζ′) *Magnificat*, (η′) Esa. 38:10–20, (θ′) the Prayer of Manasseh, (ι′) Dan. 3:23 [2–21], (ια′) *ib.* [28–33], (ιβ′) *ib.* [34–67], (ιγ′) *Benedictus*,

(ιδ′) *Nunc dimittis*. The ‘Morning Hymn’ follows on the last two pages, but it is imperfect through the loss of the lower part of the leaf.

This ‘purple’ Psalter is the pride of the municipal library of Zurich, where it has lain for at least two centuries. In a letter dated 1711 J. H. Hirzel deplores the neglect into which the MS. had fallen and of which there is still evidence in the loss of 7¾ quires at the beginning of the book, and in the numerous lacunae throughout the greater portion of the remainder. Attention was called to the importance of its text in a dissertation by J. J. Breitinger, published in 1748, and a collation was obtained by Parsons, the *continuator* of Holmes, who cites it as MS. 262. Finally, the entire MS. was copied in 1856 by Tischendorf, who after comparing his copy with the original in the autumn of 1869 gave it to the world in the fourth volume of his *Monumenta sacra inedita* (Nov. Coll.), adding prolegomena, and a coloured representation of Ps. 137:6–138:2. The collation of the Zurich Psalter for the present edition is based upon Tischendorf’s reproduction.

The earlier history of this princely MS. is unknown. But the employment of the Latin Vulgate by a contemporary hand in the margin of the Psalms and of certain of the Canticles clearly indicates its Western origin. A peculiar division of Ps. 118 (= 119) connects it with the use of the Roman Church. The Psalm is made to fall into twelve sections beginning at vv. 1, 16, 33, 49, 65, 73, 81, 97, 113, 132, 145, 161. These sections generally correspond to the portions which were said severally under one *gloria* in the Gregorian Psalter. With regard to the age of the MS., it appears to be determined within certain limits by the character of the uncials. The somewhat compressed forms of Ε, Θ, Ο, Σ, and the shape of such crucial letters as Γ, Δ, Η, and Π, justify Tischendorf’s conclusion: “septimo … saeculo adscribentes vix errabimus.”

The Zurich Psalter is free from many of the blunders which disfigure earlier MSS. The most noticeable fault is an inveterate habit of writing the forms of the aorist conjunctive for those of the future indicative. Corrections are few, as might be expected in so sumptuous a book; those which occur seem to be due to the scribe or to his *diorthota*. The readings of this MS. in are frequent agreement with Codex Alexandrinus, and to a still more remarkable extent with the second corrector of Codex Sinaiticus.

FRAGMENTA PAPYRACEA LONDINENSIA, Brit. Mus. pap. xxxvii. (A, B, C)

Fragments of the Psalms written on 30 leaves of papyrus (8¾ × 7 inches), 12 to 19 lines filling a page. The handwriting, which is singularly fresh and black, slopes considerably, and wavers between uncials and minuscules; the letters Α, Δ, Ε, Η, Μ, Υ frequently assume a cursive form. Breathings and accents are freely employed, the latter however with great irregularity both of form and of position. The words are not separated, and there is no break at the end of a Psalm. The titles of the Psalms are not distinguished from the text and the numbers are added in the margin only in two instances (κδ′, λγ′), and possibly by another hand. A single point is occasionally used. Only two portions of this Psalter (10:2–18:6, 20:14–34:6) are preserved at the British Museum, but Tischendorf hints that other scraps may exist elsewhere in England. The London fragments (32 leaves, including two which are blank on both sides) are mounted and enclosed in glass frames, which fill three book-like cases; one of the leaves is exhibited to the public.

This papyrus was purchased in 1836 from Dr Hogg, who bought it at Thebes in Egypt where it had been “discovered among the rubbish of an ancient convent.” An account of the MS. was first given by Tischendorf in *Theol. Studien u. Kritiken* (1844). Cureton announced his intention of editing it, but other engagements having compelled him to relinquish the task, it was taken in hand by Tischendorf, and the text in uncial type with prolegomena and a facsimile appeared in the first volume of his *Monumenta sacra inedita* (Nov. Coll.), Lips., 1855.

The age of this fragment has been very differently estimated. Notwithstanding the mixed character of the writing and use of accents, Tischendorf assigned it a place among the very earliest of existing Biblical MSS. on the strength of Tischendorf’s judgement it was described in the plate and letterpress of the Palaeographical Society’s publication as a MS. of the 4th or 5th century. This view is however retracted in the Introduction to the facsimiles, and the London papyrus is there adjudged to the 6th or 7th century. Dr V. Gardthausen on palaeographical grounds refuses to place it earlier than the 7th. On the other hand Lagarde, who examined the MS. in 1852 or 1853, has expressed himself in terms which transcend Tischendorf’s estimate.

This MS. is the work of a careless and illiterate scribe, but it presents a text of much value. Its readings are often unique, or agree with the Hebrew or the versions or patristic citations against all other known MSS. The corrections, which are few and appear to be *prima manu*, or the work of a contemporary, deal merely with clerical errors.

In the rest of the poetical books the witness of BℵA has been supplemented by the surviving fragments of the great Paris palimpsest, the last of the Greek Bibles of the fourth and fifth centuries.

CODEX EPHRAEMI SYRI RESCRIPTUS PARISIENSIS, Bibliothèque Nationale 9

A folio of fine vellum, written in single columns of 40–46 lines, usually 41, each line when full consisting of some 40 letters. The characters are somewhat larger and more elaborate than those of BℵA; capitals occur freely, as in A; punctuation is rare, confined to a single point nearly level with the top of the letters, and followed by a space of a letter's breadth; there are no breathings or accents *prima manu*. These and other indications seem to point to a date not later than the middle of the fifth century.

Of the 209 leaves which have survived the wreck of this great MS. Bible, the first 64 contain fragments of the LXX.; of these 19 belong to Job, 6 to Proverbs, 8 to Ecclesiastes, 7 to the Wisdom of Solomon, 23 to Sirach, whilst of Canticles only one leaf remains. The Old and New Testament portions of the MS. appear to have been written by different but contemporary hands.

This MS., as its title denotes, is a palimpsest. In the twelfth century the original writing throughout the Codex was washed out by a scribe who afterwards wrote over it in a cursive hand a Greek translation of certain homilies and other works of Ephraim, the Syrian deacon.

The O. T. fragments of this Codex were edited by Tischendorf in 1845, as a sequel to his edition of the N. T. of C, which had appeared in 1843. The editor was confronted by unusual difficulties. The MS., already defaced by the scribe of Ephraim, has been discoloured in a recent attempt (1834) to restore the original writing. Many of the leaves are badly torn, many more are scarcely legible. From a table in Tischendorf's prolegomena it appears that only three or four pages can be read with comparative ease; one of these, which contains Ecclesiastes 5:5–17, is represented by a plate at the end of his volume. A large proportion are stated to be in a condition all but desperate; and the broken lines of the facsimile are a frank confession of the editor's imperfect success. These facts suggest the need of caution in the use of C, until some attempt has been made to verify Tischendorf's results.

Tischendorf, who regards this Codex as the work of an Egyptian scribe, believes that it travelled from Egypt to Palestine, Syria or Asia Minor, and from thence to Constantinople, where it became a palimpsest. In the early years of the sixteenth century it was brought to the West by Andrew John Lascaris, and became the property of Lorenzo de' Medici. Subsequently the volume passed into the hands of Catharine de' Medici, and was conveyed to Paris, where it found place in the Royal Library.

The O. T. fragments of C have been corrected by a second hand ($C^a$) of the sixth or seventh century. The corrections are usually few, but more frequent in Ecclesiasticus.

The Editor desires to renew his acknowledgements to Dr Nestle, who revised for the first edition the notes to the Psalms, so far as they relate to Codd. ATU, and contributed to the second edition a fresh collation of Cod. B for all the books contained in this volume, obtained from the photograph published at Rome in 1890. The Editor is also indebted to Dr Redpath and to Dr Beard for much valuable aid in the correction of both text and notes throughout the volume, and in revising it for a third edition he has received assistance from Dr Nestle, Dr Redpath, and Mr H. St J. Thackeray. A debt of another kind and one which no words can interpret is due to Dr Hort, late Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity, whose patient care watched over this edition from its commencement in 1883. Lastly, if this work has any claim to the accuracy in minute details which in undertakings of the kind is at once so essential to usefulness and so hard to attain, the credit belongs in no small measure to the vigilance of the readers and the attention of the workmen and officers of the University Press.

## Introduction to Volume 3

THE present volume completes the manual edition of the Cambridge Septuagint. The work was commenced in 1883; the first volume appeared in 1887, the second in 1891. Little is needed by way of preface to this last instalment of a long task. The general principles upon which the edition is based were stated in the preface to the first volume, and both the earlier volumes have been accompanied by some account of the MSS. used in the preparation of the text and notes. It remains only to add particulars relating to the volume which is now in the reader's hands.

In the Prophets it has been possible to employ, in addition to the great codices B𝔎A, the Codex Marchalianus (Q), the Codex rescriptus Cryptoferratensis (Γ), and the Dublin fragments of Isaiah (O), as well as those edited by Tischendorf (Z). It is well known that in Daniel the text of the LXX. is preserved in one MS. only, a cursive, and not earlier than the ninth century. Before the days of Jerome the Church had ceased to read the Septuagint of Daniel, its room having been filled by the version attributed to Theodotion. This is not the place to attempt an explanation of the fact, or to discuss the relation of the two versions to one another and to the original. But since the present is an edition of 'the Old Testament in Greek according to the LXX.,' the LXX. version has been restored in Daniel to the place of honour, whilst we have placed opposite to it at each opening the version of Theodotion, which, as the Greek Daniel of the Church Bible, must always be indispensable to the student of ancient Christian literature as well as of the literary history and the criticism of the Book. Daniel is unfortunately wanting in 𝔎; but BAQ, together with Γ and a newly acquired Bodleian fragment (Δ) of a portion of *Bel and the Dragon*, supply a fair amount of uncial authority for the text of Theodotion. The Septuagint text has been derived from Cozza's transcript of the Chigi MS.; but it has been thought desirable to follow Tischendorf's example and to give at the foot of the page the readings of the Syro-hexaplaric version, our only other authority. For this purpose a collation of Ceriani's photolithograph of the Syriac MS. has been made by Norman McLean, Esq., Fellow of Christ's College, who has kindly superintended the passage of its readings through the Press, and has supplied the editor with a description of the MS., which will be found in the proper place.

The great Vatican MS., whose text and order we have generally followed, ends with the Prophets. For the Books of the Maccabees we have been compelled to look elsewhere, and since the Codex Alexandrinus is the only early Uncial which contains them all, the text of that MS. has been adopted throughout; in the notes to these Books use has been made of the Codex Sinaiticus so far as it is available, and of the important although relatively late Codex Venetus, which has been newly collated for this purpose.

The Books of the Maccabees are followed by three collections which, if they cannot in strictness be said to belong to the Greek Old Testament, have some peculiar claims to a place at the close of the Alexandrian Bible. The Psalms of Solomon, though not actually included in any uncial MS., at one time followed the New Testament in the Codex Alexandrinus, and are to be found in several cursive MSS. of the Sapiential Books. The Book of Enoch holds an important position in pre-Christian Jewish literature, and is cited in the New Testament; and the extant fragments of the Greek version of Enoch deserve for many reasons the serious attention of Biblical students. The 'Odes' are printed as they appear at the end of the Psalter of Codex Alexandrinus, with the various readings of the Verona and Zurich MSS., the former from Bianchini's transcript, verified by a personal examination of the MS., the latter from Tischendorf's facsimile. Some interest will be found in comparing the text of the Old Testament Canticles as they appear in MS. Psalters with that which they present in the Books from which they are severally derived. The New Testament Canticles and the ὕμνος ἐωθινός have been allowed to retain the place which they hold in the Psalter of Codex A.

We proceed to give some account of MSS. not previously described and used in the *apparatus* of the present volume.

### CODEX MARCHALIANUS, Vat. Gr. 2125

Contains at present 416 leaves of thin vellum, measuring 11⅜×7 inches, written in single columns of 29 lines, each line consisting of 24 to 30 letters. The first 12 leaves, which were not part of the original MS., are occupied by (1) an extract from the

Synopsis printed among the works of St Athanasius, here attributed to Eusebius; (2) extracts from the 'Lives of the Prophets' which appear in the editions of Epiphanius. The Prophets follow in the first hand, and in the order of Cod. B (i.e. the order in which they are printed in the present edition).

In its original form the MS. was without interlinear or marginal additions, except a few corrections by the *diorthota*, and the Hexaplaric marks inserted in its text. Neither breathings nor accents seem to have been added by the first hand.

This MS. was written in Egypt, and, in the judgement of Ceriani, not later than the sixth century. The characters are simple, firm, and free, with the exception of ε, θ, ο, ς, which are narrow, after the manner of the next century; but this peculiarity does not, as Ceriani has shewn, in the case of an Egyptian MS. require us to assume a later date.

The history of the MS. is of much interest. It appears to have remained in Egypt until after the 9th century, and all the additions and corrections in uncial writing are by Egyptian hands. From Egypt it passed into South Italy, probably before the 12th century, and there the patristic scholia and a few readings in the text and margin, signalised by a preliminary γρ[άφεται], seem to have been added in cent. XIII. From South Italy it was carried, perhaps by some Norman or French hand, into France, where it found a home in the Abbey of St Denys, near Paris. While in Italy the codex had received various Latin notes, chiefly renderings from the Vulgate and other elucidations of the Greek text; and this process of annotation in Latin was carried on after its arrival in France. In the 16th century the book passed out of the possession of the monks of St Denys and became the property first of René Marchal (Renatus Marchalus Boismoraeus), after whom it is still named; and subsequently of Cardinal François Rochefoucauld, to whom it belonged about A.D. 1636. The Cardinal presented it to the Jesuit College of Clermont, near Paris; a century and a half later, when the treasures of the College were dispersed, this MS. was purchased (1785) by Pope Pius VI. for the Vatican Library, where it is still preserved.

The Codex Marchalianus has been used by a succession of scholars since the beginning of the seventeenth century, among whom were Morin and Montfaucon. It was collated for the great work of Holmes and Parsons, and portions of it were edited by Tischendorf in the *Monumenta Sacra*. Dr Field used for his *Hexapla* (1875) all the materials for the presentation of its readings which were then available, and suggested and offered to defray a part of the cost of a photo-lithograph. Ultimately a heliotype of the MS. was published in 1890 under the superintendence of Cozza, and a monograph upon the Codex by Dr Antonio Ceriani, which will take its place among the classical works of Biblical palaeography, was issued simultaneously by the Vatican Press.

To return to the MS. itself. A few corrections which are coaeval with the first hand may be recognised in the heliotype by the relative thickness of the letters as well as by their form; these are denoted in this volume by $Q^1$. Other corrections in minute uncial characters, written by various hands and at different periods, are placed under the common symbol $Q^a$; and the same symbol has been used to represent the copious marginal annotations transcribed from a Hexaplaric MS. by a hand not much later than the original scribe. This hand has also inserted before Isaiah and Ezekiel two important notes evidently copied from the MS. which supplied the Hexaplaric additions; and to it is also due the writing which covers the first 12 leaves of the Codex. $Q^b$ has been used to represent the cursive Greek hand or hands of the thirteenth century.

It has been thought best on the whole to admit into the notes of this volume the whole of the uncial writing in Q, with the exception of the patristic matter at the beginning of the volume, and the memoranda on Isaiah and Ezekiel to which reference has just been made. In the Hexaplaric notes the symbols α′, σ′ (συ′), θ′ (θε′) represent the readings of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion respectively; collectively the three versions are described as οἱ γ′ or simply γ′, πάντες (π′), or οἱ λοιποί; the last term is also used when two of the versions agree against the third. Οἱ ο′ marks a true Septuagintal reading, where it differs from the text of Q; ℘ stands for, Origen, and the Hexapla is occasionally mentioned, as τὸ ἑξασέλιδον. The Hexaplaric signs employed in the MS. are the asterisk (※), the obelus (÷), and the *metobelus*. The *metobelus* has not been represented in the notes of this edition, and the *obeli* in the photograph of the MS. are faint and difficult to detect. The asterisks and *obeli* in the margins belong to $Q^a$; those in the text were added by the scribe or by a hand contemporary with him.

By an elaborate examination of a number of test passages, Ceriani has shewn that the original text of Q, which agrees largely with that of Cyril of Alexandria and of the Memphitic version, is on the whole Egyptian, and of the type which, as we learn from Jerome, was current in Egypt, the Hesychian recension of the LXX.

### Codex rescriptus Cryptoferratensis

This MS. is a palimpsest of the Prophets which has long been in the possession of the Basilian house of Grotta ferrata, near Frascati. The codex when complete seems to have formed 54 quires of 8 leaves each, measuring, to judge from a photographed specimen, 10¾ × 8¼ inches; the writing was in double columns of 25 to 28 lines, each line consisting of 13 to 20 letters; the margins were of unusual breadth. The handwriting, as shewn in the specimen, exhibits the sloping uncials which are characteristic of the eighth and ninth centuries. Initial letters often fall outside the column, and are coloured; contractions and abbreviations, such as ϗ, ϔ, μ̊, appear at the end of the lines; the rough breathing occurs frequently, but accents *prima manu* are rare.

With the exception of a few fragments which have been discovered in other palimpsest MSS. belonging to the same monastery, the surviving leaves of this great codex form part of a single volume (E. β′. vii. formerly C. 4) entitled Κοντάκια καὶ οἶκοι, and containing liturgical and poetical compositions accompanied by musical notation (*neumes*). The hand which has written these pieces over the older writing is attributed to the 13th century. In some places the parchment is doubly palimpsest; a hand of the 10th century having written a work of St John of Damascus over the uncials, itself to undergo the same treatment from the later scribe of the hymns. Other portions of the volume originally formed part of a collection of patristic homilies. The palimpsest of the Prophets, however, supplied the thirteenth century scribe with the greater part of his parchment; of the 380 pages which make up the present codex, about 260 belonged to it. Cozza, to whom we owe our knowledge of this MS., has found it possible to transcribe more or less fully 191 pages; but in some contexts his transcript shews large gaps, and there are pages where the consecutive words are very few. Hence it will be precarious for the reader of this edition to draw conclusions from the silence of Γ, which may be due to the impossibility of deciphering its testimony. To call attention in the notes to all the passages where Cozza has failed to read his MS. would have been inconvenient and scarcely practicable. But it may be well to mention here the contexts where the transcript is conspicuously defective: the fragments of Hosea, Amos, and Haggai, Zech. 10:10—end, Mal. 1:11–2:3, Isa. 52:12–53:4, 55:3–10, Jer. 20:3 ff., 51:15 ff., Bar. 1:12–2:3, 3:32–4:3 ff., Lam. 1:8–2:14, Ep. of Jer. 7–16, Ezek. 11:10–17, 16:15–31, 22:31–25:9, 30:24–31:4; the fragments of Daniel. These are large deductions from the usefulness of the codex, but it may be hoped that further examination may in time to come fill up much that is wanting now.

### Fragmenta rescripta Tischendorfiana Isaiae prophetae

These fragments contain Isa. 3:8–14, 5:2–14, 29:11–23, 44:26–45:5, written in a bold and somewhat coarse uncial hand of the eighth or ninth century, so far as it is possible to form a judgement from the specimen which Tischendorf appends to his transcript. Tischendorf himself is disposed to place it earlier, and considers that it was written in Egypt or the neighbourhood in the seventh century. Each column of the MS. appears to have consisted of 19 lines, with 19 or 20 letters to the line. An obelus is prefixed to Isa. 3:10 (εἰπόντες … δύσχρηστος ἡμῖν ἐστιν).

The fragments were found by Tischendorf during one of his journeys to Egypt and the East (probably in 1853), and published in the *Monumenta Sacra Inedita, nov. coll.* vol. i. (Lipsiae, 1857); the transcript will be found on pp. 185–198, and the facsimile (Isa. 3:9–10) at the end of the volume (tab. iii. 5). The upper writing is Armenian, and the six leaves which contain the fragments of Isaiah were probably part of the Armenian Codex to which the palimpsest fragments of the New Testament and of 2, 3 Regg., also published in the first volume of the *Monumenta*, once belonged.

### Fragmenta rescripta Dublinensia

These fragments (Isa. 30:2–31:7, 36:17–38:1) are bound up in the volume which contains the well-known palimpsest of St Matthew (Z), one of the treasures of the Library of Trinity College, Dublin. The volume consists of 110 leaves, and the later writing (? cent. XI.) presents extracts from various Greek fathers and ecclesiastical authors. Sixty-nine of the leaves are palimpsest; of these twenty-nine originally contained portions of the orations of Gregory of Nazianzus, thirty-two belonged to the Gospel of St Matthew, and eight to Isaiah. The eight leaves which yield fragments of Isaiah were but four in the original codex. Each of the original leaves measured at least 12×9 inches; the writing was in two columns of 36 lines, with 14–17 letters in each line. With two or three exceptions the characters resemble generally those of the fragments of St Matthew, and probably belong to the same age; the forms of the A and M point to an Egyptian scribe, and the general style of the writing is that of the early sixth century. There are no large initials, the abbreviations are few and simple; breathings and accents are entirely wanting, and the writing is continuous, except where a space denotes a break in the sense; the punctuation is limited to the use of a single point.

The fragments of St Matthew were edited by Dr J. Barrett in 1801, when attention was briefly called to the fragments of Isaiah. The latter have been published in facsimile by Dr T. K. Abbott, Professor of Hebrew, sometime Professor of Biblical Greek, in the University of Dublin, to whose account of the MS. the above description is chiefly due. The Isaiah fragment was collated for Holmes and Parsons, and in their edition is denominated VIII: Lagarde distinguishes it as O, and his symbol has been used in the present volume.

CODEX CHISIANUS, Biblioth. Chis. Rom. R. vii. 45

This MS. contains Jeremiah, Baruch, Lamentations, Ep. of Jeremiah, Daniel κατὰ τοὺς ο′, Hippolytus on Daniel, Daniel (Th.), Ezekiel, Isaiah. Since there are no signatures, and both Daniel and Ezekiel begin fresh quires, it is impossible to say whether the order of the book is that of the original codex. The present MS. is a large folio of 402 leaves, in gatherings of 8. The handwriting appears to belong to the Calabrian school of Greek calligraphy, and the date usually assigned to it is the ninth century.

The MS. once belonged to Pope Alexander VII., a member of the Chigi family, who recognised its importance and entrusted the publication of the text to Leo Allatius, at that time librarian of the Vatican. Leo proceeded with his work so far as to procure a complete copy of the codex, and this transcript is still preserved among the Chigi MSS. (= R. vii. 46). A century later Bianchini took up the work, and after his death the *editio princeps* appeared at Rome in 1772. Among later editions are those of Michaelis, Segaar, Bugati, and Hahn; and the text was published in succession by Holmes and Parsons, Mai, and Tischendorf. Meanwhile the MS. itself had received little attention, until at the suggestion of Vercellone a critical edition was undertaken by Cozza, whose labours, published in the third part of his *Vetustissima fragmenta*, have at length provided Biblical scholars with an adequate transcript of this unique MS.

The Oxford editors quote two Chigi MSS. on the Prophets, which they call 87 and 88. Field, however, has shewn that their 88 is Leo Allatius's copy, and abandons the task of identifying their 87, while he uses the latter number for the true Chisian text. In this we have followed him, citing Chis. R. vii. 45 as 87.

CODEX SYRO-HEXAPLARIS AMBROSIANUS, Biblioth. Ambros. Mediol. C. 313. Inf

Contains Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, and all the Prophets, from the literal Syriac version of the entire LXX. made from a hexaplar text in the years 616–617 by Paul, Bishop of Tella dhe-Mauzelath or Constantina. The MS. is of somewhat thick parchment, and almost everywhere well preserved. It contains 193 leaves of 14½×10¾ inches; there are two columns to the page, each containing about 55 lines. The character is a well-formed, somewhat thick Estrangelo, very easily read. The titles, most headings of chapters and lessons, ornaments, and sometimes the larger points, are in red: occasionally other colours are employed. The asterisks and obeli of Origen's LXX. are faithfully reproduced, and many extracts from the other Greek versions are given, in a Syriac translation, in the margin. The book of Daniel (including Susanna, and Bel and the Dragon) begins on the first page of f. 143, and ends with f. 151.

The first volume of this codex was in the possession of Andreas Masius, but seems to have disappeared at his death in 1573. It contained part of Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, the four books of Kings, Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah, Judith, and part of Tobit. The extant volume was brought to the Ambrosian Library early in the 17th century from the monastery of S. Maria Deipara in the desert of Scetis, as we learn from a note at the end, which Ceriani believes to be in the handwriting of Antonio Giggeo. It lay for a long time unused, and attention was next called to it by Branca in 1767. After he, Björnståhl, and De Rossi had published descriptions and specimens, it was examined by Norberg in 1778; and as a result he edited Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Bugati published Daniel in 1788; his Psalms appeared posthumously in 1820. Middeldorpf's edition of Isaiah, the Minor Prophets, Proverbs, Job, Canticles, Lamentations, and Ecclesiastes followed in 1835; and the series was continued by Ceriani's edition of Baruch, Lamentations, and the Epistle of Jeremiah in *Mon. Sacra et Profana*, t. i. (1861). Of even greater value then these editions is his photolithographic reproduction of the entire codex issued at Milan in 1874. Finally, the readings of the Syriac codex have been thoroughly examined and placed in comparison with those of Greek hexaplar MSS. by Field in his great work on the Hexapla.

FRAGMENTA RESCRIPTA BODLEIANA. MS. Gr. bib. d. 2 (P)

Two vellum fragments making a quire of four leaves, each leaf measuring, when complete, about 5⅛×3½ inches. The first four pages contain portions of *Bel and the Dragon* (vv. 20–41) according to Theodotion, in upright majuscules of the fifth if not the fourth century. Underneath these on pp. 1, 2 in slightly sloping letters of perhaps the fourth century is a fragment of a (?) homily containing a reference to Matt. 9:37–8 or Luke 10:2. On pp. 3, 4 the original hand had written some Latin 'rustic' capitals, among which the words PROCVRATOR, PROCVRATORES, or part of them, frequently occur; p. 5 has the letters DOMIT …, possibly referring to L. Domitius Domitianus, an Egyptian pretender in the time of Diocletian.

The substance of this description is due to E. W. B. Nicholson, Esq., Librarian of the Bodleian, who has very kindly supplied a collation of the fragment of Bel, and subsequently compared the proof of the notes with the MS. The scantiness of our uncial authorities for this part of the text of Theodotion's Daniel seemed to justify the use of the Oxford fragment, which has been quoted as Δ. These interesting scraps were acquired by the Bodleian Library in 1888, and came from Egypt.

Codex Venetus Gr. 1

A large folio vellum MS., the leaves of which measure 16½×11⅔ inches; written in the sloping uncials of the eighth and ninth centuries, with the exception of certain portions of the text which are in the round but artificial characters of the same period. The writing is arranged in double columns of 60 lines, with an average of 30 letters to the line. New sections begin with a letter (often an inch long) outside the column. The parchment varies in quality; it is usually thick but not coarse; some leaves however are too thin to take the ink readily. The MS. is gathered in quires of 8 leaves, bearing signatures which range from κς′ ($V^a$) on f. 1 to με′ ($V^a$ = μς′ V*) on f. 153. Thus the original Codex seems to have consisted of about 372 leaves, of which the first 208 have disappeared. The present volume begins with Job 30:8 (καὶ κλέος) and contains the rest of Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, both Wisdoms, the Minor Prophets (in the order Hos., Am., Joel, Ob., Jon., Mic., Nah., Hab., Zeph., Hag., Zech., Mal.), Isaiah, Jeremiah, Baruch, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel (with the apocryphal additions), Tobit, Judith, and the four Books of the Maccabees. After Daniel, and again after 4 Macc., the scribe has copied from his archetype a chronological table reaching from Adam to Justinian I, which in the second and fuller from ends ὡς ὁμοῦ (*cod.* ωμ.) γίνεσθαι ἀπὸ χῦ παρουσίας ἕως ὧδε ἔτη φογ̄ (ut vid): the margin adds εἰσὶν ἕως ὧδε ἔτη σπε̄ An ornamental cross below these dates bears the inscription: Κύριε, βοήθει (*cod.* -θη) Βασιλείῳ μοναχῷ ἡγουμένῳ (*cod.* ἰγ.) τῆς Κάρον (sic, ut vid) τῷ συνγραψαμένῳ τὴν βίβλον ταύτην (*cod.* τι βιβλίω ταυτη); and beneath the cross is added: Παρακαλῶ εὔχεσθαι ὑπὲρ Ὀνησίμου μοναχοῦ ἁμαρτωλοῦ καλλιγράφου. ἀμήν. On ff. 163b–164b a minute hand has written the Eusebian canons.

This precious MS. belonged to the library of Cardinal Bessarion, by whom it was given with the rest of his Greek codices to the library of Saint Mark's at Venice.

It was used for the great Roman edition of 1587, as the preface to that volume announces, and probably supplies in great part the text of the first three Books of the Maccabees, which are wanting in the Vatican codex. Specimens of its readings were liberally produced by Zanetti in his catalogue of the Greek MSS. of St Mark's (Venice, 1740), and the importance of the MS. was recognised by Giac. Morelli, who described it at length in his account of the codices under his care. Stroth also gave some account of it in Eichhorn's *Repertorium* for 1781 (p. 181). A collation of the whole MS. was made for Holmes and Parsons in 1789 by Geo. Zoega and Nich. Schow; the correspondence which relates to this undertaking is still preserved in the Venice library. The Oxford editors, however, were not at first made aware that it was written in uncials, and it takes rank in their notes as a cursive under the number 23. The prologues to the Prophets were printed by Tischendorf in his *Anecdota sacra et profana*, pp. 103–9, Lips. 1855.

In the present edition Cod. V has been employed only for the four Books of Maccabees, where the paucity of uncial testimony rendered it necessary to depart from the rule which prescribed the sole use of such MSS. as are accessible in published facsimiles and photographs. The four Books as given in V were collated afresh by the Editor of this work in the spring of 1895; but by the courtesy of Dr E. Klostermann he had been previously provided with a collation of the second Book, which that scholar had made in 1892–3, and Dr Klostermann also kindly compared the new collation of Books i.–iii. with his own. Where the two collations differed, an appeal was made to the notes of Holmes and Parsons.

The MS. has been corrected by the scribe himself or his *diorthotes* ($V^1$), and by a late hand ($V^a$), but the corrections with few exceptions affect only the spellings.

FRAGMENTA TISCHENDORFIANA LIBRI QUARTI MACCABAEORUM

Four leaves used in the binding of the MS. of the Acts, Epistles and Apocalypse known as Codex Porfirianus Chiovensis (P), and published by Tischendorf with a facsimile of the writing in *Mon. Sacr*. vi. 339, 340f. Tischendorf ascribes the hand to the seventh century; but the characters, which are large, coarsely formed, and sloping, are suggestive of the ninth. The fragments (viii. 5, 6, 11, 12, 15, 29; ix. 28–30, 31, 32), brief as they are, present some peculiar readings, which seemed to justify their employment in the present edition.

The following MSS. have been used for the PSALMS OF SOLOMON.

CODEX CASANATENSIS. A MS. on paper of cent. xii–xiv, consisting of 310 leaves, measuring 38·4×24·9 cm., and containing the Psalter with a catena, the Psalms of Solomon, and other Scriptural and liturgical collections. The Psalms of Solomon in this MS. were collated for Professor Gebhardt by Dr J. Tschiedel.

CODEX HAVNIENSIS. A folio MS. of the 11th century, written in double columns. The volume was purchased at Venice in 1699, and in 1732 passed into the Royal Library at Copenhagen, where it is still preserved (no. 6). It consists at present of quires 11–39 of the original MS., containing Job (with a catena), Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles (these three books with scholia), Wisdom of Solomon, Psalms of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus. A collation of the Psalms of Solomon was made by Professor Ryle in 1888 at Cambridge, where the MS. was deposited for the purpose by the courtesy of the Copenhagen authorities. Professor Gebhardt has used another which is due to Ch. Graux.

CODEX IBERITICUS. A MS. on paper of the 14th century belonging to the Iveron monastery (ἡ μονὴ Ἰβήρων) on Mt Athos; it contains Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Wisdom, Sirach, and the Psalms of Solomon, followed by scholia on some of the books, and other patristic matter, Written στιχηρῶς. Transcribed by Ph. Meyer in 1886.

CODEX LAURENSIS. A MS. of the 12th century belonging to the Lavra monastery (μονὴ μεγίστης λαύρας τοῦ ἁγίου Ἀθανασίου) on Mt Athos. Its 310 leaves contain an exposition of the Psalter, the Odes, the Psalms of Solomon, and a commentary on Canticles by Cyril of Alexandria. The Psalms of Solomon in this MS. were collated for Professor Gebhardt by Ἀλέξανδρος Λαυριώτης.

CODEX MOSQUENSIS. A thirteenth century MS., consisting of 225 leaves measuring 13¾×11 inches, written in two or sometimes in three columns. The book contains Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Wisdom of Solomon, Psalms of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus; the first four Books are accompanied by catenae or scholia. This MS. was brought to Moscow in 1653 from the monastery of Iveron at Mt Athos. A transcript of the *Psalms* was furnished to Professor Ryle and Dr James by the Archimandrite Wladimir of Moscow, and a collation was made in 1874 by Professor Gebhardt.

CODEX PARISINUS. A quarto of 495 leaves written on paper in 1419, consisting of miscellaneous matter and containing *inter alia* (ff. 224ª–248ª) the Wisdom and Psalms of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus. The volume is preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris, where it is numbered 2991 A. A collation was made for the Cambridge edition of the *Psalms* by the Abbé Batiffol, of Paris, and another by Professor Gebhardt in 1877.

CODEX ROMANUS (Vaticanus Gr. 336). This MS. which is cited by Parsons as 253, and used by him for Job, Proverbs, Canticles, and the two books of Wisdom, is a quarto vellum MS. of the 12th century, containing in 194 leaves Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Wisdom, Psalms of Solomon, and Ecclesiasticus. The text of the Psalms of Solomon in the first edition of this volume was derived from a collation made by Dr E. Klostermann in 1893; in the present edition use has been made of the corrections and a few of the conjectural emendations supplied in Professor Gebhardt's book.

CODEX VINDOBONENSIS. A folio MS. of the 11th century, written in double columns of 26 lines, and in a semiuncial hand. The volume, which is numbered Cod. Gr. Theol. 7, and was purchased at Constantinople in the sixteenth century, consists of 166 leaves, and contains Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles (with a catena so far), Wisdom of Solomon, Psalms of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus. The collation used by the Cambridge editors was communicated to them by Dr Rudolf Beer; for the present edition of this volume Professor Gebhardt's collation has also been available.

The text of ENOCH has been derived from the following sources:

CODEX PANOPOLITANUS. A MS. discovered in 1886 in a grave at Akhmîm, the Panopolis of Strabo. The volume contains (1) fragments of the Pseudo-Petrine Gospel and Apocalypse, (2) a large fragment of the Greek version of the Book of Enoch; the latter, which is written in uncials of the 8th or 9th century, occupies 23 leaves and contains Enoch i–xxxii. Ch. xix.3–xxi.9 has been

written twice, before ch. i. 1 as well as in its proper place; both texts are given in this edition, the detached fragment being placed at the foot of the page and distinguished by the symbol $P_2$. The text of P in this edition has been obtained from M. Bouriant's heliogravure in *Mémoires publiés par les membres de la Mission Archéologique Française au Caire, t. neuvième* (Paris, 1892).

CODEX VATICANUS Gr. 1809, a tachygraphical MS. described by Mai *scr. vet. nov. coll.* vi., *praef.* p. 37, contains an excerpt from Enoch (c. lxxxix) printed by Gildemeister (*ZDMG.*, ix., p. 621 ff.); a specimen of the tachygraphy may be seen in Mai *patr. nov. bibl.* ii., *ad init.*; cf. Gitlbauer, *Die Ueberreste griechischer Tachygraphie im cod. vat. gr.* 1809 (Wien, 1878–1884).

Fragments of the Greek Enoch are preserved also in the Chronography of Georgius Syncellus (Enoch *cc.* vi. 1–ix. 4, viii. 4–x. 14, xv. 8–xvi. 1, and a short extract to which the Ethiopic version of Enoch yields no parallel). These are printed in the present volume at the foot of the Akhmîm text, in a smaller type. For Syncellus use has been made of the edition of W. Dindorf, who quotes two Paris MSS. (A, B), and the readings of Goar's text ($Sync^g$). The single fragment of Enoch preserved in the Epistle of St Jude is given as it stands in the text of Westcott and Hort, but the readings of ℵAC are added in the apparatus.

The Akhmîm text as reproduced in M. Bouriant's heliogravure has been collated afresh for this edition. Reference has also been made to Professor Dillmann's paper *über den neufundenen griechischen Text des Henoch-Buches* (in *Sitzungsberichte d. k. pr. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin*, 1892); M. Lod's *Livre d'Hénoch*, (Paris, 1892) and Mr Charles's *Book of Enoch*, Oxford, 1893.

The Greek Psalters which supply the text of the ecclesiastical Canticles and of the notes upon them have been described in the preface to the second volume of this work (pp. viii–xii).

The pleasant duty remains of acknowledging the help which has been liberally rendered on every side. Official duties prevented the editor from devoting to this volume so much of his time as he was able to give to the two volumes which preceded it. The greater part of the preparatory work was therefore entrusted to two colleagues, the Rev. Forbes Robinson, M.A., of Christ's College, and H. St John Thackeray, Esq., M.A., of King's College, whose assistance the Syndics of the Press kindly enabled him to secure. Mr Robinson collated the photographs of BAQ as far as Jeremiah 36, where his work was taken up by Mr Thackeray, who completed the task, and also prepared the appendix of unsubstantial variants. Without the patient and accurate labour of these fellow-workers the appearance of the third volume would have been delayed perhaps for several years. Students who use this volume will also owe a debt of gratitude to Mr Redpath and to Dr Nestle, who continued their invaluable work of revision. Mr Redpath again read through the proofs, with excellent results, and Dr Nestle generously volunteered to recollate the whole of the sheets of the Prophets with the photograph of B. It may therefore be hoped that a near approach to perfect accuracy has been made so far as that MS. is concerned. A similar service has been rendered by Dr C. I. Beard, who has with scrupulous care compared the apparatus to Isaiah and Ezekiel with the facsimile of Q, and the result of his labours has been to enrich the notes of this second edition with a large number of fresh particulars chiefly relating to the Hexaplaric signs, as well as to correct errors which had found their way into the edition of 1894. In dealing with the textual difficulties of the second Book of Maccabees the Editor was assisted by the Revised English Version and by a list of readings prepared for the use of the revisers, proofs of which were supplied to him by the kindness of the late Dr Moulton. The publication of the Syriac version of 4 Maccabees has thrown fresh light upon the Greek text of that book, and Dr Barnes has generously compiled for the present edition a list of its most important readings, which will be found at the end of the Appendix.

The great scholar to whom this book owed its inception and its inspiration is, alas, no longer with us. But the recollection of Dr Hort's keen interest in the progress of the work—an interest sustained to the last days of his life—remains to give strength to those who have entered on the more arduous and responsible task of preparing the larger edition of the Cambridge Septuagint.

The death of Dr Hort on Nov. 30, 1892, was followed within six months by that of Professor Bensly, and the University has since been called to deplore the loss of Professor W. Robertson Smith. In each of these eminent Oriental scholars this undertaking found a warm friend. Professor Bensly was at the time of his death a member of the LXX. Committee, and he had hoped to take an active part in the collection of materials for the larger edition. Professor Robertson Smith's deep interest in all that concerns the study of the Old Testament secured for the Cambridge Septuagint his steady support and occasional

but valuable assistance; within a few weeks of his death his counsel was sought upon some doubtful points connected with the present volume, and most kindly given.

In conclusion, the Editor desires to express his personal thanks to the Syndics of the University Press for the indulgence they have shewn to him during the course of a work which has necessarily been of slow and uncertain growth; to the Septuagint Committee for their consideration of the questions which have from time to time been submitted to their judgement; and to the officers and workmen, especially the readers, of the Press, whose unremitting attention has brought the printing of these volumes to a successful end.

## ABBREVIATIONS

א = Codex Sinaiticus (= S, Lagarde, Nestle).

A = Codex Alexandrinus (= III, Holmes).

B = Codex Vaticanus (= II, Holmes).

D (*D*) = Codex Cottonianus Geneseos (= I, Holmes).

E (*E*) = Codex Bodleianus Geneseos.

F = Codex Ambrosianus (= VII, Holmes).

C = Codex Ephraemi Syri rescriptus Parisiensis.

R = Psalterium Graeco-Latinum Veronense.

T = Psalterium Turicense (= 262, Parsons).

U = Fragmenta papyracea Londinensia.

## 12. Onbekend

# The Hebrew Masoretic Text and the Greek Septuagint

In Romans 3:1 & 2, God's word tells us that the Jews were committed to the oracles of God. The Jews were given charge of keeping and copying God's word. That is why twice in the Old Testament they were instructed not to add to or take away from the Word of God.

• "***Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you." Deut. 4:2***

• "***Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar. Proverbs 30:6***

Faithful Hebrew scribes took the task of copying God's word seriously. According to the Hebrew Talmud the rules of the scribe consisted of the following:

• The skins of the parchment had to be prepared in a special way and dedicated to God. In order to have God's words written on them they had to be clean.
• The ink that was used was to be black and made in accordance to a special recipe used only for writing scripture.
• The words written could not be duplicated by memory, but must be reproduced from an authentic copy which the scribe had before him. The scribe had to say each word aloud when he wrote them.
• Each time the scribe came across the Hebrew word for God, Jehovah (YHWH), he had to wash his whole body before he could write it.
• If a sheet of parchment had one mistake on it the sheet was condemned. If there were three mistakes found on any page the whole manuscript was condemned. Each scroll had to be checked within thirty days of it's writing or it was considered unholy.
• Every word and letter was counted. If a letter or word was omitted the manuscript was condemned.

As to the accuracy of the Hebrew Old Testament in our day, a study was done on the 581 manuscripts of the Old Testament which involved 280,000,000 letters. The study concluded:
1. Out of 280,000,000 letters there were 900,000 variants. Although seemingly large to the reader it is only one variant in 316 words, which is 1/3 of 1%.
2. Of those 900,000 variants, 750,000 pertained to spelling, whether the letter should be an I or U. This has to do with vowel points for the purpose of pronouncing the word.
3. That leaves 150,000 variants in 280,000,000 letters. That is one variant in 1580 letters with a degree of accuracy of .0006 (6 ten thousandths).
4. Most of the variants were found in just a few manuscripts; in fact, mostly in just one corrupted manuscript.
5. The earliest Masoretic Text is dated 900 AD. In the Book of Isaiah, only one three letter word was different.
6. The Masoretic text is the true text, because the Dead Seas scrolls were written by the Essenes.
The Septuagint exhibits considerable differences among themselves and they disagree with the Masoretic Text. The following are just a few of the errors:
1. There was a 500 year difference just during the time between Adam and Noah.
2. The Greek Septuagint teaches a local flood. It has Methuselah dying 14 years after the flood and he was not even on the ark!
3. The years of the Kings of Israel were incorrect.
4. Lucifer was not the Anointed Cherub as recorded in Ezekiel.
5. The account of the seventy two translators, which came to 6 out of each tribe, was not acceptable according to scripture. The Levites were the only tribe to keep and record the Oracles of God. (1 Chron. 16:4)
6. Jews were not permitted to live in Egypt (Deut. 17:16), but they did and they fell into idolatry. (Jeremiah 44 "Queen of Heaven")
7. All copies of the Septuagint had originated from the school of Alexandria which was the home of Gnostic and Aryan teachings.
8. The story of the Septuagint, which has several contradictions, only deals with the translation of the first five books of the Old Testament, not the other thirty-four.
9. Both texts cannot be correct. Since the Hebrew text has demonstrated itself to be the word of God, then the Septuagint should be rejected.

**Did our Lord Jesus Christ use the Septuagint?**
It would seem that Jesus did not use the Septuagint for several reasons:
1. In Matt. 5:17 & 18, Jesus refers to the Law and the Prophets and then continues to say that not one "jot" or "tittle" would pass from the law until all be fulfilled. Jot & tittle refer to the Hebrew, not Greek.
2. In Matt. 23:35, Jesus tells the religious leaders of the day that they were guilty of the blood of the righteous from Abel to Zacharias. Zacharias is found in II Chronicles, which is the end of the Hebrew Old Testament, were as the Septuagint ends with Daniel before it goes into the Apocrypha. It seems as if he was telling them from beginning to end that they were guilty.
3. Jesus never made reference to any of the Aporcapha books which are in the Septuagint.
4. The Hebrew language was still active. When Paul met the Lord on the Damascus road Jesus spoke to him in Hebrew(Acts 26:14). Even when John wrote Revelation, he spoke about the last great battle which is known in the Hebrew tongue (Rev. 16:16) "Armageddon".

**Was the Septuagint used by the New Testament writers?**
Out of the 263 quotations of the Old Testament that are found in the New Testament, 85 of them correspond to the Septuagint, while the rest correspond to the Hebrew or vary from both. It would seem that there was no standardized Greek text of the Old Testament.
Note: In the preface of the Septuagint there is a quote saying that there is a 3rd century B.C. Septuagint text that is extant(which means that they have such a copy). No such document exists today as we know it.

**Was there a Pre Christian era Septuagint?**
Paul Kahle, an Old Testament scholar (1875 1964), did extensive research on the Septuagint. His conclusions were that there was never one original, old Greek version and that the manuscripts of the Septuagint cannot be traced back to one archetype (original pattern).
An interesting thing to consider is that today scholars in both Old Testament and New Testament studies are relying on Alexandrian manuscripts to determine what is the best reading.
Years ago the Hebrew was held as the most reliable manuscript of the Old Testament. In the last 100 years the Greek Septuagint has replaced the Hebrew in scholarly circles.
One of Satan's greatest tactics is to sow seeds of doubt that will lead to disbelief concerning God's word. As was in the garden, so is today.
***"Yea hath God Said?"***
To the Christian, the enemy's aim is to destroy his faith in the word of God. To the unbeliever, he aims to blind the minds of the unbelieving (2 Corinthians 4:4).
Which one will you choose?

## 13. RK Harrison

*a. The Septuagint*. By far the most important version of the Old Testament is the LXX or Alexandrian Version,

since it was associated by tradition with the activities of the Jewish community at Alexandria in Egypt. The origin of the name "Septuagint" (in full, "Interpretation of the Seventy Men [or Elders]") is unknown Originally it applied only to the Pentateuch as rendered into Greek. A legendary explanation is found in a letter written about 100 B.C., purporting to be from a certain Aristeas to his brother Philocrates during the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–247 B.C.).[74] This document related how the monarch, having been persuaded by his librarian to secure a translation of the Hebrew prophecies for the royal library, appealed to the High Priest at Jerusalem, who responded by sending seventy-two elders to Alexandria with an official copy of the Law. Over a period of seventy-two days these men made a complete translation of the Torah, working independently during the day and comparing their results in the evening so as to arrive at a rendering that would be satisfactory to all concerned This translation was then read to the Jewish community amid scenes of great enthusiasm, and was subsequently presented to the king. This story was embellished both by Jewish and Christian writers to the point where, in the fourth century, it was firmly believed that the translation comprised the entire Hebrew Bible, and that each scribe, working independently, had produced a rendering which was identical with those of his collaborators.[75] A fragment from the writings of an Alexandrian Jewish philosopher named Aristobulus, whose work is generally attributed to the period 170–150 B.C., was preserved by Eusebius and Clement of Alexandria, and dealt with the supposed origins of the LXX .[76] According to Aristobulus, portions of the Hebrew Scriptures relating to Israelite history had been translated into Greek at an earlier period, but by contrast the entire Torah was rendered into Greek in the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus through the efforts of Demetrius of Phalerum. Less plausibly, he claimed that Homer, Hesiod, Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato were familiar with portions of the Pentateuch.

The most that can be said assuredly about these traditions is that about 250 B.C. the Torah was translated into Greek at Alexandria, either as a means of impressing and converting the heathen,[77] or of supplying the expatriate Jews in Alexandria with a Scriptural version in the vernacular[78] for purposes of worship or private study. This constituted the original LXX; the remainder was translated in piecemeal fashion. The canonical books had been rendered into Greek a little before 117 B.C., for they are referred to by the grandson of Ben Sira in the Prologue to Ecclesiasticus. The Apocrypha was completed at the beginning of the Christian era and interspersed among the canonical books. Finally the name "Septuagint" was extended to cover the entire corpus of translated material. This name, derived from the Latin *septuaginta*, meaning "seventy," hardly coincides with the tradition of seventy-two translators preserved in the *Letter of Aristeas*, and it may be that the term either arose or gained currency because of some popular association with the "seventy elders" of Exodus 24:1 and 9, with the seventy members of the Sanhedrin, or with the seventy apostles mentioned in the ministry of Christ (Lk. 10:1).[79]

While the evidence from Qumran[80] makes it obvious that the LXX had a long and involved prehistory, it seems unlikely that underlying the LXX there was a rendering of the Hebrew into Greek letters, as Wutz proposed.[81] Undoubtedly there were in existence transliterations of the Hebrew text into the Greek alphabet, analogous to the Samaritan Pentateuch, as an initial step towards helping Hellenistic Jews who could not follow the Hebrew script to understand the portions that were read aloud in the synagogues.[82] While the LXX does in fact employ Greek transliterations on occasions, particularly in the case of names, it is improbable that the LXX utilized such transcriptions to any significant extent. Thackeray suggested that the earliest portion of the Old Testament to be translated into Greek was the Torah, and that this was followed by Isaiah, parts of Samuel and Kings, the remainder of the Prophets, and finally by the Writings.[83] The balance of Samuel and Kings was thought to have been added by a later translator from Ephesus, whose Greek style resembled that of Theodotion

Questions concerning the existence and nature of a "proto-LXX" have been raised by the fact that quotations from Greek sources in the New Testament writings and in the work of Josephus and Philo do not correspond verbally with the present LXX text.[84] This circumstance has been taken as implying that there were a number of early Greek texts in existence prior to the work of the LXX translators. Accordingly Kahle suggested that the *Letter of Aristeas* referred, not to a new translation, but to a revision of certain renderings already in existence in order to produce a standard Greek Bible for the benefit of Jews in the Hellenistic Diaspora.[85] Kahle styled this collection of renderings a "Greek targum," and pointed out the diversity of readings which it embraced. For him the LXX as used by the Christian Church was not necessarily the one mentioned in the *Letter of Aristeas*, but was more probably one of the current translations into Greek, which the Christian Church ultimately adopted as its canonical Greek version of the Hebrew Old Testament. By this time the term "Septuagint" had been expanded to include the entire Old Testament and Apocrypha, whereas for Aristeas it had merely signified the Pentateuch This view was developed by Sperber, who

postulated the existence of a transitional period when Greek was used both for transcription and translation purposes to help the Hellenistic Jews of Egypt to read the Hebrew Scriptures.[86] This situation gave rise to sporadic attempts at translation, leading to the existence of at least two Greek renderings of the Old Testament which can be identified from quotations in the New Testament, whose writers regularly employed Greek versions instead of the Hebrew for their citations.

Although these theories may well throw important light upon the transmission of the text they are extremely difficult to demonstrate with facts, as Orlinsky has pointed out,[87] particularly where the postulate of at least two original and independent Greek renderings of the Hebrew Bible is concerned Such arguments are rendered even less valid if, as some New Testament scholars suggest, it can be shown that many of the quotations in New Testament writings were derived originally from an Aramaic source or sources, or perhaps even from oral traditions, from memory, or from private translations. Again it should be observed that, while there are a few significant disagreements between manuscripts of the LXX, there are very many more agreements of such a character to indicate beyond reasonable doubt that the various manuscripts belong to the same family. Furthermore, the kind of variant to which Kahle appeals can more probably be accounted for as revisions of a basic LXX text than as remnants of rival translations or back-readings from New Testament authors.

It should be remembered, of course, that there is no definite proof that the early Christian Church ever regarded any

particular Greek Old Testament text as standard,[88] and that, as the evidence from Qumran indicates, there was a good deal of freedom in the use of textual types during the immediate pre-Christian period. Yet in the days prior to Origen there was in existence a form of text which constitutes the LXX version, as made evident by the Chester Beatty papyri and the Scheide papyri.[89] While there are certain differences in New Testament usage, there is no doubt that of all the Greek versions the LXX was employed predominantly and that it enjoyed independent existence in the period just prior to the time of Christ.

The language of the LXX is by no means the normal Hellenistic Greek as represented by the papyri of Egypt and other sources, any more than is its counterpart in the New Testament. Even the most idiomatic renderings reflect certain obvious Hebraisms, and there are a great many passages which are little better than transliterations of the Hebrew. In numerous respects the Greek rendering of the Pentateuch is superior to the remainder of the work, and this may well indicate the degree of esteem in which the Pentateuch was held by the translators. Although the finished form of the Pentateuch exhibit

## 14. AN EVANGELICAL APOLOGY OR THE SEPTUAGINT by Timothy E. Miller1

**He who would read the New Testament must know Koine; but he who would understand the New Testament must know the Septuagint.[2]**

—Sidney Jellicoe

**A single hour lovingly devoted to the text of the Septuagint will further our exegetical knowledge of the Pauline Epistles more than a whole day spent over a commentary.[3]**

—Adolf Deissmann

**The importance of the Septuagint for study of the NT cannot be underestimated.[4]**

—Stanley Porter

The title of this paper is intentional, capitalizing on the ambiguity of the word *apologetic*. Of course, one could apologize *for* the Septuagint, and I am afraid this is how many evangelicals feel about the Greek Old Testament's existence. On the other hand, one could *offer a defense* of the Septuagint, and that is the sense I am intending to use throughout this essay. Jellicoe, Deissmann, and Porter above stress the essential na- ture of Septuagint study for the understanding of the New Testament. Nevertheless, most evangelical seminaries do not offer study in the Sep- tuagint, and many evangelical pastors have never read the Old Testa- ment in the Septuagint—even if they have gained proficiency in Greek. The purpose of this paper is not to outline the reasons for such a sad state of affairs; rather, I would like to convince the reader that the Sep- tuagint is worthy of scholarly attention. To accomplish this goal, we must first discuss what is mean by "the Septuagint." Second, we must

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2Sidney Jellicoe, "Septuagint Studies in the Current Century," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 88 (1969): 199.

3Adolf Deissmann, *The Philology of the Bible: Its Present and Future* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1908), 12.

4*Dictionary of New Testament Background,* s.v. "Septuagint/Greek Old Testament," by Stanley E. Porter Jr., 1104.

trace its provenance, showing why it is important for evangelicals today. Third, we will assess the challenges the Septuagint brings to the evangel- ical interpreter. Finally, I will conclude with some suggestions as to how the Septuagint can be helpful to evangelical study.

## TERMS FOR THE SEPTUAGINT

The Septuagint (LXX) popularly refers to the Old Testament trans- lation of the Hebrew into Greek. This popular definition does not dif- ferentiate recensions, but instead is used in the same way one might say "English Bible" to refer to the NIV, ESV, and NASB. Originally, how- ever, the term referenced the *translators* (70 or 72 and thus LXX) more than the *text* that was translated. Further, these first translators only translated the Pentateuch. For this reason, some specialists distinguish the original translations of the non-Pentateuchal books by calling them "Old Greek." Accordingly, the abbreviation LXX/OG indicates the en- tire OT corpus while also emphasizing the diversity of this ancient text.5 Other scholars reserve the designation Septuagint for a critical text that has been carefully weighed to determine the original text (also referred to as the Ur-Septuagint or the Proto-Septuagint). Finally, some scholars include the Apocrypha within the Septuagint, while others consider it separate. Within this paper, Septuagint and LXX are used in its popular sense to refer to any Greek recension of the Hebrew Old Testament without reference to the Apocrypha.

## TEXTUAL AND TRANSMISSION HISTORY

To understand how the LXX can aid the modern student of Scripture, we must examine the LXX's transmission history. *The Letter of Aristeas*, composed in the 2nd century B.C., indicates that King Ptolemy II of Egypt desired to collect the books of the world in his library. Recognizing the importance of the Hebrew Scriptures to his subjects, he called for six elders from each Hebrew tribe in Jerusalem to come to Alexandria to make a translation of the Pentateuch into Greek. After arrival in Egypt, the translators completed the task in only 72 days. Notably, the letter contained a curse on anyone who would modify the text.6

any, *tter of Aristeas* is a true historical account. Obvious historical errors and the miraculous nature of the translator's timetable lead scholars to conclude that the letter was fabricated.8

5W. Edward Glenny, "The Septuagint and Biblical Theology," *Themelios* 41 (August 2016): 265.

6*The Letter of Aristeas* (London: Macmillan, 1904).

7Demetrius, who was supposedly the librarian, was actually exiled when Ptole ey II took power. Further, Menedemus, who was spoken of as present at the banquet welcoming the Jewish translators, had passed away several years prior (*The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, s.v. "Septuagint," by Melvin K. H. Peters, 5:1096).

8Theories on the reason for the fabrication include the following: it may have been

Nevertheless, while the text may be false, many believe it does contain some kernels of truth. Bruce Metzger provides a list of facts upon which scholars agree concerning the letter:9 First, it is highly probable that the translation was done in Alexandria Egypt, where a large number of Jews lived during the third and second century B.C. Enculturation led to a loss of the Hebrew language among the populace, necessitating a trans- lation.10 Second, the entire Pentateuch was translated at one time, re- sulting in a unity of style, vocabulary, and philosophy of translation. Third, it is doubtful that 70 or 72 people worked on the translation. A rabbinic version of the same story indicates only five translators, which is much more probable considering the unity of the text. Fourth, while the translators do not appear to have come from Palestine, the Hebrew scrolls used for the translation may have come from there. Finally, the vernacular of the translators betrays an Egyptian vocabulary, affirming that the translators were, likely, not from Palestine.11

ext after the original translation is hard to dis- cern. From what modern scholars can determine, the text of the non- Pentateuchal books was translated over a period of a few hundred years, evidencing a wide range of translation philosophies from relatively free to woodenly literal.12 The discovery of the Qumran documents has shed much light on the history of the LXX, but it has also raised more ques- tions.13 For instance, what were once considered post-Christian era readings (Lucian and Theodition) were discovered to be pre-Christian era readings. In light of the Qumran documents, we now know that later recensions (second and third centuries A.D.) had access to LXX manuscripts that are much earlier, yet are no longer extant.

ledge of the transmission history from the second century B.C. to the second century A.D. is limited, our knowledge of second century A.D. recensions/translations is more secure.14 The LXX was widely used by both non-Christian as well as Christian Jews in the

written as a defense of translating the Hebrew; it was written as an apologetic piece for the divine law to the Egyptians; or it was written as a defense of the current or new text against another Greek text (ibid.).

9Bruce M. Metzger, “Important Early Translations of the Bible,” part 1, *Bibliotheca Sacra* 150 (January–March 1993): 38–39.

10Ibid., 37–38.

11Examples include χονου, a vessel or cup (Gen. 44:2); φιβις, ark (Ex. 2:3); and παπυρος, papyrus (Job 8:11) (Everett Falconer Harrison, “The Importance of the Septuagint for Biblical Studies [Part 1],” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 112 [October 1955]: 345).

12See the chart on the range of translation philosophies in Porter, “Septuagint/ Greek Old Testament,” 1102.

13See William W. Combs’s essay for a concise analysis of the impact the Qumran docu ents have made on Septuagintal transmission scholarship (“The Transmission- History of the Septuagint,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 146 [July 1989]: 255–69).

14I call them recensions/translations because “it is not easy, and in some cases not possible, to discern whether a given Greek version is a revision or a translation” (*The Encyclopedia of Christianity,* s.v. “Septuagint,” by Leonard J. Greenspoon, 4:915).

first century, but that changed in the late first century moving into the second. Peters explains: “The Jews became alienated from the Septua- gint shortly after its adoption by the Christian church not so much be- cause of their unwillingness to share but because, with disconcerting frequency, additions or mistranslations that clearly favored Christian theology were found in the Greek Bible.”15

o examples from Isaiah support Peters’s observation. In Isaiah

7:14, the LXX translated עַלְמָה as παρθένος (allowing the translation

*virgin*), but later Jewish editions translated it as νεᾶνις (young woman). In addition, the Hebrew of Isaiah 53 has no technical sacrificial termi- nology, but the original LXX authors used such terminology through- out.16 Clearly both translations favored a Christian reading, and they can be shown to precede Christian influence on the text. Those reject- ing a Christian view desired a new translation clarifying how they be- lieved such passages *should* be translated. Three Jewish translations are known to have b en produced in this period, but they exist only in fragments today.17

n resp e three Jewish translations/recensions and partly due to other concerns, three new translations/recensions were produced by Christians in the third century A.D.18 The most important of these is Origen’s Hexapla. This massive work is believed to have been more than 6500 pages. Organized in six columns, the Hexapla recorded the Old Testament texts available to Origen in the following order: the Hebrew of his day; the Hebrew transliterated into Greek; Aquila’s re- cension; Symmachus’s recension; the LXX; and Theodition’s recension. In some places Origen included up to three more columns depending on the texts he had in his possession. Origen’s purpose seems to have been to recover the LXX by analyzing the various texts available to him. wo problems plague the history of the Hepaxla, limiting its value.

15Melvin K. H. Peters, “Why Study the Septuagint?” *The Biblical Archaeologist* 49 (September 1986): 178.

16Karen H. Jobes, “The Septuagint as Scripture in the Early Church,” in *The Sacre t: Excavating the Texts, Exploring the Interpretations, and Engaging the Theologies of the Christian Scriptures*, ed. Michael F. Bird and Michael Pahl (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2010), 29.

17The first translation/recension is Aquila’s (2nd century). It is exceptionally literal with a “precision that borders on the absurd” (Peters, “Why Study the Septuagint?” 178). The second is Theodition’s, who seemed to have access to a LXX text that is no longer extant. Some of his otherwise unique renderings are found in the NT use of Daniel, which clearly precedes Theodition himself (Greenspoon, “Septuagint,” 915). The final translation/recension comes from Symmachus, whose text was designed to conform to the Hebrew with “literal accuracy and a good use of Greek idiom” (Peters, “Septuagint” [*ABD*], 1098).

18In addition to the Hexapla produced by Origen, Lucian and Hesychius also prod recensions/translations. Lucian wrote his shortly after Origen, but this translation is controversial, for it appears that some of his translations are ancient, indicating that he was using an otherwise unknown LXX text (Combs, “Transmission- History of the Septuagint,” 264). Hesychius made his around A.D. 400 in Egypt, but it is unknown other than a brief mention by Jerome.

First, Origen, mistakenly assuming the source text for the LXX was the same as the Hebrew he possessed, sought to correct the fifth column in light of his Hebrew text. Though Origen originally included marks to indicate his own additions to the LXX text, later copyists did not always retain these markings.19 Thus, the result of Origen's work actually muddied the water more than cleared it from the mud. This brings us to the second problem. At 6,500 pages, the Hexapla was nearly impos- sible to fully copy. Therefore, only the fifth column has been fully pre- served, and such copies are tainted by the suspicion that many of the criti al marks were not preserved.

odern scholar recover the Ur-Septuagint, the earliest text of the Septuagint.20 As can be seen from the textual history discussed above, this is a complicated field involving numerous moving parts. It may be helpful to highlight the difficulties. First, the earliest witnesses we have to the LXX occur in *translations from* the LXX (Old Latin, Coptic) or in citations from the church fathers. These are of lim- ited value in that one must determine the role the translator had in *in- terpretation* while translating, and one must determine whether the church father quoted from memory or from an actual LXX manuscript. Second, the Theoditian and Lucian recensions evidence the existence of LXX texts that are no longer extant. Greenspoon adds, "It is possible, even likely, that NT writers had access to forms of the Septuagint that are no longer extant."21 Third, there is a pervasive pattern in recensions to modify the text in light of the translator's Hebrew text. If the original LXX was translated from a different Hebrew source than the MT, such recensions tend toward losing those distinctive readings.22

challenges, some scholars, including Stanley Porter, argue that it is not necessary to recover the Ur-Septuagint. Instead of "creating a hypothetical text that does not match any ancient manu- script," using one of the ancient uncial (e.g., Vaticanus) witnesses is sufficient.23 Peters however, calls the use of only one uncial "reprehensi- ble."24 Since we have over 100 MSS and 2000 witnesses to the text of the

19Ibid., 267.

20Albert Pietersma, "Septuagint Research: A Plea for a Return to Basic Issues,"

*Vetus stamentum* 35 (1985): 296–311.

21Greenspoon, "Septuagint," 914.

22Some have suggested another potential problem; namely, did the church modify the L or apologetic purposes? If so, this adds another challenge to recovering the original text. That such modification occurred is undeniable. Justin Martyr debated with Philo over Psalm 96:10 (95:10 in LXX) because Jerome's version included the critical phrase "from a tree," suggesting a reference to the crucifixion. Since we have found no manuscript evidence for such a reading, Jerome's LXX appears to have been intentionally altered. Nevertheless, despite this example, "modern scholarship has affirmed that the Christian scribes did not generally impose distinctively Christian theology on the Greek T text as it was copied" (Jobes, "Septuagint as Scripture in the Early Church," 35–36).

23Porter, "Septuagint/Greek Old Testament," 1104.

24Peters, "Septuagint" [*ABD*], 1104.

LXX,25 hope should not be lost in attempting to recover the original.26 ering the Ur-Septuagint is critical for numerous reasons, but

for evangelicals, the textual critical implications are perhaps most signif- icant. It is only when we have assurance that we have the original LXX (or something exceedingly close) that we can have confidence to engage in text-critical use of the text.27

w, the critical te vailable are Oxford's, Cambridge's, and Göttingen's. Oxford's was produced between 1788 and 1827, with the final edition taking into account the "readings of some 300 MSS (including 20 uncials), evidence from the Old Latin, Coptic, Arabic, Slavonic, Armenian and Georgian versions as well as patristic cita- tions."28 Cambridge's LXX was accompanied by Henry Barclay Swete's shorter edition, which was produced in Cambridge in 1894. He used Vaticanus's Old Testament Greek text as a base and modified it in light of other uncial witnesses. Swete's shorter volume was followed by a few more extensive critical texts, but since the last volume published under this project was finished in 1940, it does not appear that the project will be completed.29 Göttingen's Septuaginta is also accompanied by a short volume produced by Alfred Rahlfs.30 Like Swete's version, this was de- signed as a stand-in until the major Göttingen project could be com- pleted—a project still underway. Like Swete's, Rahlfs's is not a critical text, ut it is based on the uncials (Vaticanus, Alexandricus, and Sinait- icus).

hile still underway, has already been a gift to s holarship, and many anticipate its completion. In those books where there is no Göttingen edition, Rahlf's is usually considered the superior source.

## CHALLENGES FOR EVANGELICALS

Despite the widespread recognition of the importance of the LXX, evangelical scholars have not been at the forefront of Septuagint studies. While there are undoubtedly many reasons for this, perhaps some of them stem from the presumed challenges the LXX presents to those who have a conservative view of the inspiration of Scripture. I will

25Peters, "Why Study the Septuagint?" 175.

26Many of the witnesses we have to the LXX predate the great uncials, however they exist in translations *from* the Septuagint—e.g., we have Coptic and Old Latin witnesses going back to the second century A.D. These are clearly not as useful as direct Greek witnesses, but they are still helpful.

27Of course, recensions may be valuable too in that they tended to "fix" the text to reflect the Hebrew then extant. But since the LXX is valuable for its *ancient* witness, w should desire to find the most ancient text for fruitful text-critical analysis of the Hebrew.

28Peters, "Septuagint" [*ABD*], 1095.

29Ibid.

30Alfred Rahlfs, ed., *Septuaginta* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979).

present two apparent problems and then show that neither problem forces evangelicals to disregard their view of inspiration, inerrancy, or their belief in the preservation of Scripture.

*Septuagint or Masoretic Text?*

Should we abandon the Masoretic Text in favor of the LXX, or, to put it less divisively, should we favor the LXX over the MT? Some have called for the recovery of the LXX as the church's Old Testament.31 A few arguments can be asserted for such a position. First, as Peters indi- cates, "the Hebrew parent of the Septuagint represents a stage in the development of the Hebrew textual tradition earlier than any existing Hebrew witness. Our earliest complete Hebrew manuscripts come from a period some 1,200 years later."32 Since the earlier manuscripts are as- sumed to have been copied less (and thus introduce less errors), the ear- ly date of some complete LXX manuscripts makes them quite valuable. Second, the Bible of the early church was the LXX. Jaroslav Pelican ac- curately notes that "it was not until the biblical humanists and the Re- formers of the sixteenth century that a knowledge of Hebrew became standard equipment for Christian expositors of the Old Testament. Most of Christian doctrine developed in a church uninformed by any knowledge of the original text of the Hebrew Bible."33 Further, Jesus and the writers of the New Testament appeal to the LXX more than the Hebrew. Thus, the Scripture they are reflecting on is the LXX not the MT. Should these facts cause us to abandon the M in favor of a criti- cal LXX or even to prioritize the LXX over the MT?

is even more difficult considerin the differences be- tween the MT and the LXX. While there are some inconsequential dif- ferences (e.g., the order of the books), there are also more significant differences. The Jeremiah text of the LXX is an eighth shorter than its MT counterpart, while Job is a sixth shorter in the LXX. Apocryphal additions provide Esther with 103 extra verses in the LXX, while providing multiple chapters of additional material to Daniel (*The Histo- ry of Susanna*, *Bel and the Dragon*, and *the Song of the Three Children*). Samuel and Kings are so different from the MT that some scholars be- lieve they are built on an earlier, and perhaps better text.34 These differ- ences understandably challenge evangelical interpreters for whom the Scripture is the final rule for faith and practice.

has championed the position that while the Septuagint is helpful, useful, and even critical in a full- orbed understanding of the New Testament, modern believers should continue to use the MT as

31Møgens Müller, ed., *The First Bible of the Church: A Plea for the Septuagint*

(Sheffield, UK: Bloomsbury T. & T. Clark, 2009).

32Peters, "Why Study the Septuagint?" 179.

33Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 21.

34Peters, "Why Study the Septuagint?" 180.

the base text and to use the LXX as a tool for refining and understand- ing that Hebrew text. In the most concise form, she says that we should utilize the LXX in the study but not in the church.35 Jobes offers nu- merous reasons for this assertion. First, the ultimate goal of the evangel- ical text critic is the establishment of the original text, for the authority of Scripture is found in the prophet's recording of God's revelation, which occurs in a written text—in this case, a Hebrew text. While the LXX may provide some clues to early Hebrew readings, "the *Hebrew* OT stands closest to [the] autographs."36 In other words, the LXX is a *translation* of the Hebrew, while the MT is a *copy* of the Hebrew. While both translation and copying may introduce errors into a text, few would argue that translations give a better depiction of the original text than copies do. Translation introduces interpretation to a level that copying does not.

, beca the evangelical's ultimate goal is to recover the original text, the history of the LXX outlined above gives little confi- dence.37 Granted, the MT is not perfect, and there are certainly places where the LXX offers us a reading that it most likely original;38 never- theless, this history of the MT is not as checkered with recensional ac tivity as the history of the LXX.

T has proven itself as an early, faithful witness to the original documents. Combs is correct when he notes that "the manu scripts from Qumran have demonstrated that a major reason for the differences between the Septuagint and the Masoretic text is that the Septuagint is based on a different Hebrew textual tradition than the Masoretic text, but one that is of equal antiquity."39 Yet the differences between the LXX and the MT are not so different to warrant a rejection of the MT.40 Note what Peter Gentry says about the differences be tween the LXX and MT:

Although a multitude of apparent differences exist between the LXX and MT or other Hebrew witnesses, we must first eliminate issues arising from differences between source and target languages as codes of communica- tion, corruption within the transmission of the Greek version, and

35Karen H. Jobes, "When God Spoke Greek: The Place of the Greek Bible in Evangelical Scholarship," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 16 (2006): 222–23.

36Ibid., 225.

37Ibid., 226.

38See some examples in Peter J. Gentry, "The Septuagint and the Text of the Old Testament," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 16 (2006): 206–9.

39Combs, "Transmission-History of the Septuagint," 258.

40See Gentry's article, in which he seeks to show the reliability of the MT even in spite of some of the major differences between it and the LXX. For instance, Gentry shows that the difference in the length of Job is not because of a different Hebrew; rather, scholars have recently shown that it is the product of shortening the original Hebrew. Cleary, then, the MT is to be preferred in the reading of Job (Gentry, "Septuagint and the Text of the Old Testament," 197).

differences that are translational and not genuinely textual. When such differences are eliminated (as more than 25 years of careful, patient, and painstaking comparison of the LXX and MT have shown), the first datum from this study is the high level of agreement between the two.… Let us not forget that the LXX witnesses to the fact that our Hebrew text is, for the most part, ancient and pristine.41

Further, the discoveries in Qumran have strengthened the case for the reliability of the MT, showing that the MT available today is signifi- cantly in line with the Hebrew of the Qumran documents.42

, Jesus categorizes Scripture acco ding to the Hebrew structuring (Law, Prophets, and Psalms) rather than the Septu- agintal structure (Law, History, Poetry). One may counter that Jesus frequently used the LXX instead of the Hebrew when preaching and teaching.43 While this is true, it is possible that Jesus did so because it was the translation of the people, and as the Good Teacher, Jesus sought to connect the text in the most significant way to his audience. Whatever else can be said about Jesus's use of the LXX or Hebrew, it is clear that Jesus valued the Hebrew Bible, giving us pause to entirely abandon it in light of the LXX.

h, following both Jerome and Luther, Jobes suggests that it may be "inappropriate that a translation made by Jewish translators should form the basis of the Christian Scriptures."44 In illustration, she notes that few, if any, evangelicals would think it appropriate for the church to use the Pentateuch text developed by the Jewish Publication Socie- ty.45 The LXX is the production of Alexandrian Jews who had not yet received New Testament revelation. And because translation and inter- pretation are inseparable, modern translators are better able to render the original meaning of the Hebrew. Or as Jerome put it, the LXX translators "translated before the Advent of Christ, and expressed in ambiguous terms that which they knew not. We after His Passion and Resurrection write not prophecy so much as history. For one style is suitable to what we hear, another to what e see. The better we under- stand a subject, the better we describe it."46

41Ibid., 212–13.

42Jobes, "When God Spoke Greek," 226.

43While one might argue that the Gospel writers contextualized Jesus's teaching and thus modified Jesus's Hebrew citations to LXX citations, this goes against the evidence. Longenecker has shown that Matthew prefers to cite from the Hebrew, but when he records Jesus's citations, they come from the LXX. The most logical explanation is that Matthew was seeking to be faithful to the teaching of Jesus, using the LXX where Jesus used the LXX (Richard N. Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period*, rev. ed. [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999], 26).

44Jobes, "When God Spoke Greek," 228.

45Idem, "Septuagint as Scripture in the Early Church," 229.

46Jerome, "The Prologue to Genesis," in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church: Theodoret, Jerome Gennadius, Rufinus: Historical Writings, Etc.*, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (New York: Christian Literature

Because they lacked a knowledge of Hebrew, early Christians living few centuries after Christ had no option other than using the

LXX, but now that we have access to greater knowledge of the Hebrew and access to translations that take into account the fuller revelation of the NT, there is no reason for the church to return to the LXX. Such a position, however, should not minimize the importance of the LXX, for as Gentry remarks, "Genuine textual variants should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and one should not prefer *a priori* either the LXX or the MT."47 While the text of the MT should be preferred on the basis of the arguments above, when there are differences between the MT and LXX that *point to a different Hebrew text* (this is what Gentry means by *genuine* textual variants), one must evaluate whether the textual source used by the LXX might not preserve a better rendering than the MT. Such a stance generally privileges the MT as a witness *in Hebrew* to the original *Hebrew* but allows the carefully weighed text of the LXX to contribute to our understanding of the original Hebrew text.

*Septuagint and the Apocrypha*

Another challenge faced by evangelicals is the presence of the Apoc- rypha in many of the manuscripts containing the LXX. Even the lan guage of the LXX evidences the challenge, for some use LXX to refer only to the Hebrew Scriptures translated into Greek, while others in- clude the Apocryphal additions in defining the term. All the significant uncial manuscripts (e.g., Aleph, A, B, and C) contain portions of the Apocrypha, and some scholars have concluded that their presence indi- cates an "Alexandrian Canon," which differs from the standard canon of 39 Old Testament books recognized by modern evangelicals.48

early concerned about the extent of the canon, for if th Scripture is the basis for faith and practice, the limits of the canon are of vital importance. Nevertheless, it is not clear that the inclusion of Apocryphal works indicated the acceptance of those books into the can- on. First, the variation of additions to the LXX text in the major uncials evidences that there was no fixed "Alexandrian Canon," for if so, one would naturally expect each uncial to contain the same Apocryphal texts.49 Second, Everett Harrison brings to our attention that "Philo

Company, 1892), 3:516.

r, Emanuel Tov asks whether the Alexandrian Jews were capable of knowing the meaning of the text they were translating, further suggesting that some of the translation decisions of the LXX betray an ignorance of the actual meaning of the Hebrew ("Did The Septuagint Translators Always Understand Their Hebrew Text?" in *The Greek and Hebrew Bible: Collected Essays on the Septuagint*, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum [Leiden: Brill, 1999], 217).

47Gentry, "Septuagint and the Text of the Old Testament," 197.

48Glenny offers a concise summary of the arguments proposed by those who believe both that the LXX's canon included the Apocrypha and that the modern church should use this alternative canon ("Septuagint and Biblical Theology," 266–69).

49Porter notes, "Most scholars do not now believe there ever was an Alexandrian

(25 B.C. to 50 A.D.), who was from Alexandria where the LXX was first translated makes no quotations from the Apocrypha; and he gives not the slightest ground for the supposition that the Jews of Alexandria, in his time, were disposed to accept any of the books of the Apocrypha in their Canon of Holy Scripture."50

hat one of th arguments for embracing the LXX canon is built on an illegitimate cultural transfer. In our day, the inclusion of books with the covers of the Bible suggests equal authority, but how can we know that this is what was meant by the addition of Apocryphal works in one collection in antiquity?51 Of course Jobes's argument works best for the additional books (e.g., I and II Maccabees), but it is less persuasive for the *additions to* Esther and Daniel. Peter Gentry's illustration helps here. He compares the ancient manuscripts to Bibles in a modern Christian bookstore. These Bibles include a vari- ety of back matter (maps, introductions, explanatory essays, etc.) that might be interesting to the reader, but is not thereby considered Scrip- ture. He asks whether future archaeologists digging through the remains of a Christian bookstore might not make some of the same mistakes current scholars make about the Apocryphal books.52 While Gentry's analogy may be criticized (as most analogies can), it does serve to high- light that the inclusion of books or extra material in a scroll or bound tome does not indicate the extra material is considered of the same au- thority as the rest of the material in the scroll/bound tome.

e the history of the Old Testament canon from its Jewish roots into modern evangelical expression, we should note that even if it were proved that *some* Alexandrian Jews believed *some* Apocryphal works were of equal authority with the rest of the Old Testament, the issue of canon is larger than what any one individual or group believes about it.53 In sum, the inclusion of Apocryphal works in the LXX witnesses does not demand the acceptance of those texts into a biblical canon.

## HOW CAN THE LXX AID EVANGELICAL BIBLICAL STUDIES?

Having traced the history of the LXX and spoken to the reserve some evangelicals may have in using the text, we can now turn to a dis- cussion of five major ways the LXX is presently useful to evangelicals.

canon" ("Septuagint/Greek Old Testament," 1100).

50See also his arguments from Josephus's writings ("Importance of the Septuagint for Biblical Studies [Part 1]," 374).

51Jobes, "Septuagint as Scripture in the Early Church," 39.

52Gentry, "Septuagint and the Text of the Old Testament," 217.

53For a more detailed analysis see Roger T. Beckwith, *The Old Testament Canon of the New Test Its Background in Early Judaism* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2008).

*Text-Critical Use*

When asked what the LXX can provide for evangelicals today, many would primarily recognize its potential for textual criticism of the MT. This use is appropriate in light of three factors. First, the Hebrew text was not fixed until early in the Christian era. Thus, the LXX, which was translated centuries before, provides some level of evidence for the Hebrew text used by the translators. Indeed, Gentry reminds us that "the Septuagint remains in many cases the earliest witness to the text of the OT and therefore of immense significance and value."54 Second, the manuscripts discovered in the Dead Sea region verify that some early Hebrew texts match the renderings in the LXX better than the MT (though many of the Hebrew manuscripts align with the MT).55 Third, there are readings in the LXX that appear superior to the renderings in the MT.

l mples of the superiority of a LXX reading over the MT reading will be examined because of the limitation of space. First, in 2 Samuel 6:5 the MT indicates that the musicians were playing with "fir trees," but the LXX reads "tuned instruments." The Holman Chris- tian Standard Bible (HCSB) renders this "fir wood instruments," seek- ing to make the best of the Hebrew. But since the reading of the MT can be explained by metathesis (switching of letters) in the original He- brew, it is preferable to see this as a case where the LXX preserves the original text.56

nd m Genesis 4:8, where the MT reading is preserved in the text of the ESV, "Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field…" In a footnote, the ESV indicates that the Septuagint and Samaritan Pentateuch read "Cain spoke to Abel his brother, *'Let us go out to the field.'* And when they were in the field…" While the MT reading is possible, the LXX reading is prefera- ble not only because the text flows more naturally, but also because a corruption of the Hebrew text is easily explainable as a haplographic error, where an early copier accidently skipped ver that series of words because the Hebrew word for field is repeated.57

es used above have been hallenged as to wheth er the LXX actually presents a better rendering. This shows that using the LXX as a corrective to the Hebrew of the MT is not a simple task.

54Gentry, "Septuagint and the Text of the Old Testament," 194.

55Harrison, "Importance of the Septuagint for Biblical Studies (Part 1)," 352.

56Peters, "Why Study the Septuagint?" 179.

57It could be argued, however, that the MT is the correct reading and the LXX and other witnesses reflect an early *addition* to the text to make it more comprehensible. There is even a suggestion that the Hebrew word normally translated here as "spoke" should instead be translated as "despised." If so, there is no awkward transition; instead, the text reads smoothly as "And Cain *despised* his brother Abel. And it came to pass, when they were in the field." See Albert Ehrman, "What Did Cain Say to Abel?" *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 53 (1962): 164–67.

Peter Gentry's article, "The Septuagint and the Text of the Old Testa- ment," walks through the associated difficulties, concluding that such use is possible if the "foundational principles" of using a "version as a witness to a parent text" are consistently applied—something "current discussions frequently reveal…are forgotten."58

*Lexical and Grammatical Use*

The language of the NT is significantly impacted by the use of the LXX in the early church. This impact occurs both because the texts Je- sus, the apostles, and the early prophets chose to cite from are Septua- gintal, but also because evidence suggests that the LXX would have been the best-known text in that day. If, when seeking to understand the use of a Greek word or grammatical structure, one only turns to classical and Hellenistic Greek, he or she has missed a massively influential source of information on the way terms are used and understood in the Greek OT Scriptures. As Harrison notes, "The student of Scripture cannot afford to be indifferent to the Semitic influence which has flowed into the Greek of the New Testament by way of the Septuagint, and must learn to examine New Testament concepts in the light both of their Greek and Hebrew provenance."59

the sake of space, we can give only one example.60 In classic

Greek, ἀδελφός referred to a literal, blood-related brother. The LXX broadens the range of meaning, allowing for it to refer to one's neighbor and, even more specifically, to one who is of the same nation. The NT's use of this word plays off the LXX additions to the range of meaning. In the NT, the church, as a new nation (1 Pet. 2:9–10), embraces this term for its members. Despite blood relationships, ultimately believers are brothers/sisters in Christ, for it is in him that one's true identity is found as a new people.

*Commentary Use*

A third way evangelicals may find the LXX useful is by recognizing it as an early commentary on Scripture. Peters rightly notes that "to the extent that every translation is a commentary, [the LXX] is the earliest commentary on the Hebrew Bible."61 As noted above, translations can- not avoid some element of interpretation even if they seek to be literal in rendering. Therefore, the LXX provides access (though admittedly veiled) into the religious thought of those doing the translation. Of

58Gentry, "Septuagint and the Text of the Old Testament," 194.

59Everett Falconer Harrison, "The Importance of the Septuagint for Biblical Studies: The Influence of the Septuagint on the New Testament Vocabulary (Part 2)," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 113 (January 1956): 45.

60This example is adapted from Harrison, where he provides three more examples (ibid., 35–45).

61Peters, "Why Study the Septuagint?" 179.

course, difficulty arises from the variety of translators and the multiplic- ity of recensions. It remains a possibility that a Jewish or Christian read- er modified the text of the LXX in light of his own theological purposes, preventing access to the original LXX and thwarting a proper understanding of the commentary provided from it.

oblems, the critical editio s of the LXX (par- ticularly Göttingen's) give hope of being able to recover the original. As such, these texts help modern students of Scripture gain insight into the religious thought-life of the intertestamental period, which impacts NT studies. One of the favorite passages of NT authors is what is sometimes called the Suffering Servant passage in Isaiah 53. We noted above that the Hebrew lacks sacrificial terminology, but the LXX authors imported such terminology into the context. By doing so, they gave us a glimpse into their interpretation of the passage. While there are still questions concerning the full import of the language (e.g., did the translators have a suffering Messiah in mind?), the inclusion of sacrificial terminology did impact the way readers during the NT period read the text.

ther notable example that has been debated throughout church

history is the use of παρθένος in the LXX of Isaiah 7:14. Did the origi- nal translators choose this word to emphasize *virgin* more than young woman (as the Hebrew term, עַלְמָה , implied)?62 If the translators meant more than a young woman (as their word choice appears to imply), this

provides evidence that the intertestamental readers of the OT may have recognized a messianic prophecy here. Whatever one determines about the intended meaning of the translators, what is clear is that Matthew utilized the LXX's rendering in referencing the *virginal* conception of Jesus (Matt. 1:23)—and this points forward to the next use of the LXX we will consider.

## Old Testament Citation Use

It can be disturbing for some evangelical readers when they realize the T prophecy cited in the NT (from the LXX) substantially differs from the OT text they have in the same Bible (translated from the MT). For example, if one reads Matthew 1:23 in the Revised Standard Version, it says, "Behold, a *virgin* shall conceive and bear a son," but Isaiah 7:14 in the RSV reads, "Behold, a *young woman* shall conceive and bear a son." The RSV sought to accurately communicate the He- brew in the OT and the Greek in the NT, and what is lost is the Greek OT, which is the text Matthew is citing. Even in 1900, it was recog- nized by H. B. Swete that the LXX "was the principal source from which the writers of the NT derived their OT quotations."63

62BDAG indicates παρθένος refers to "one who has never engaged in sexual intercourse, virgin, chaste person" (777); HALOT indicates that עַלְמָה , refers to a "marriageable girl" or a "young woman" (2:835–36).

63Henry Barclay Swete, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek: The Contents of the Alexandrian Old Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

Earl Ellis, in his research on Paul's use of the Old Testament, showed that of Paul's ninety-three quotations, fifty-one are clearly from the LXX, four are clearly from the MT, and the other thirty-eight times Paul follows no textual tradition still extant.64 A few important points can be derived from Ellis's work. First, the thirty-eight divergences are not equally spread throughout Paul's OT citations; instead, "All quota- tions from Kings, Job, Jeremiah and Hosea differ from the LXX, as do about half of those from Isaiah and Deuteronomy." On the other hand, quotations from Genesis and Psalms are very consistent with the LXX.65 It is quite possible that the divergences in these specific works derive from Paul's use of a LXX text that is no longer extant. Longenecker likewise indicates that some of Jesus's citations appear to "differ from all known Old Testament versions, whether Greek, Hebrew, or Arama- ic."66 Second, Paul clearly preferred the LXX. Considering that Paul was a Hebrew of the Hebrews (Phil 3:5) and a student of Gamaliel (Acts 22:3), it is highly unlikely that he did not know Hebrew. His preference for the LXX is thus noteworthy.

tes that Paul LXX twenty-two times when it disa rees with the Hebrew, 67 and this demands some consideration. If Paul knew the Hebrew and Greek, why would he choose to use the LXX rendering instead of the Hebrew? But this question is not for Paul alone, for other NT writers do the same. An example of Jesus's use of the LXX where it differs from the MT comes from Mark 7:6–7, where Jesus quotes Isaiah 29:13.68 The LXX in the New English Translation of the Septuagint (NETS) reads, "in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts and teachings."69 The MT reads, "and their fear of me is a commandment taught by men." By quoting the former Jesus em- phasizes the futility of the religious leader's hypocritical worship as well as the fact that the religious leaders taught their own doctrines as com- mandments, and these points perfectly fit the context which concerns criticism of Jesus's disciples for not washing before eating. Had Jesus quoted the MT, the central emphasis—that the religious lead rs were making their *own standards* the law—would have been missed.70

writing comes from Romans 15:10, where Paul cites Deuteronomy 32:43. The LXX reads, "Be glad, O nations,

1900), 392.

64E. Earl Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2003), 12.

65Ibid., 12, n. 6.

66Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period*, 46.

67Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament*, 12.

68This example is adapted from Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Perio* , 45–46.

69New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.

70This example is adapted from Peters, "Why Study the Septuagint?" 180.

*with his people*" (NETS—emphasis added), whereas the MT reads, "Re- joice, you nations, *concerning His people*" (HCSB—emphasis added). Paul's use of this text in Romans resides within a series of five citations all supporting the idea that Christ came to fulfill the covenant with Abraham "in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy" (15:9). Clearly, if Paul had used the Hebrew, this verse would not sup port his point, but the LXX rendering perfectly reinforced it.

ps the most cited Old Testament quote that depends on a unique rendering in the LXX is the citation of Amos 9:11,12 in Acts 15:16, 17. James, as a leader in the Jerusalem church, was publicly re- sponding to the report on Paul and Barnabas's successful Gentile mis- sion. He argued that God was working among the Gentiles, calling out a people for his name. In support, James referenced the LXX rendering of Amos 9:11, 12: "On that day I will raise up the tent of David…in order that those remaining of humans and all the nations upon whom my name has been called might seek out me" (NETS). The Hebrew, however, is not as explicit, and therefore less useful to James's speech: "In that day I will raise up the booth of David…that they may possess the remnant of and all the nations who are called by my name."

an OT citation *clearly* differs from the Hebrew rendering commentators turn to the Greek text, asking whether the author was using the Septuagint rather than the Hebrew in the citation. Karen Jobes warns, however, that this is not enough. What if the Hebrew ren- dering and the LXX rendering of the verse under question are substan- tially similar, yet the *broader context* is different? In these cases, commentators may miss the author's point, since the commentator did not pursue the broader context of the LXX.71 Jobes concludes, "Exegesis is methodologically flawed if the context of the Hebrew is assumed but in fact it was the Greek OT that was in the NT author's mind."72 Jobes, in her commentary on 1 Peter, sought to develop the OT quotations from the perspective of the quote *within the LXX*, and she found places where the broader LXX context made an interpretive difference in 1 Peter.73

o ction, we should mention a question that might be on the mind of the reader. Does a New Testament author's use of the LXX when it differs from the MT rendering create difficulties from an evangelical perspective? Of course, one could simply conclude that anytime a NT author cites from the LXX, the LXX's rendering is shown to be original and the Hebrew corrupt. But such an escape ap- pears too easy and frequently fails to consider the full weight of evi- dence. It may be that the LXX renderings are original, but that ought to

71Jobes, "When God Spoke Greek," 235.

72Ibid.

73Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005); idem, "'O Taste and See': Septuagint Psalm 33 in 1 Peter," *Stone-Campbell Journal* 18 (September 2015): 241–51.

be shown rather than assumed. In light of the difficulties, evangelical work needs to be done on many of these texts. Ed Glenny provides a helpful illustration of an evangelical LXX scholar who has sought to navigate these difficult waters. In his article, "The Septuagint and Apos- tolic Hermeneutics: Amos 9 in Acts 15," Glenny seeks to prove that "the detailed exegetical work reflected in the scriptural quotation in Acts 15:16–18 reflects the use of the Hebrew Bible, the text of which was important for the Apostolic Decree and the connection with Isa 45:20–21, as well as the LXX, which was the nucleus of the quotation and center around which most of the exegesis apparently took place."74 By arguing that the LXX rendering was related to (and developed from) the Hebrew rendering, Glenny seeks to show that there is no contradic- tion between the OT text and its use in its Greek translation. Instead, the LXX was more of an interpretation of the Hebrew, and since the interpretation was accurate, it was found to be useful in the early church.

use of the LXX brings to the New Testa- ment evangelical interpreter, the LXX also provides solutions to other difficulties. Jobes notes that "the Septuagint may provide the answer to some of the charges that the NT writers use their quotations out of con- text, if exegetes are looking to the context of the Hebrew text when in fact the NT writer was assuming the context of the Greek OT."75 Fur- ther, by examining why a NT author incorporated the LXX rendering instead of the Hebrew rendering (where the author is presumed to know the Hebrew rendering), we get a glimpse into the import of the OT passage.76 This is not to say that every difference between the MT and LXX is an interpretive translation; rather, when there is reason to believe the MT is not corrupt and there is a way of seeing how the LXX rendering derives from the meaning of the passage, we have reason to suggest the LXX translators sought to bring out the meaning of the text in their translation.

## Historical Use

There are two major ways the LXX can aid in understanding histo- ry. irst, the LXX is without a doubt the OT Bible of the ancient church. Even when the OT text was translated in the early church, it was translated *from the LXX* (e.g., Coptic, Gothic, Syriac, Slavonic, Georgian, Ethiopic, Arabic, Armenian, and the Old Latin are all

74W. Edward Glenny, "The Septuagint and Apostolic Hermeneutics: Amos 9 in Acts 15," *Bulletin for Biblical Research*, no. 1 (2012): 23.

75Jobes, "When God Spoke Greek," 235.

76"I contend that Christian biblical theologians should understand theological statements that are unique to the LXX to complement and extend the understanding of the Hebrew Bible, as far as they reflect and repackage the theology found in the Hebrew Bible or as far as that reflected and repackaged theology of the LXX is picked up and used in the NT" (Glenny, "Septuagint and Biblical Theology," 278).

translations *from the LXX*).77 The perspective of the early church, then, was informed by the LXX, not the Hebrew. If we are to make sense of their use and reading of the OT, we must be conversant with the LXX. Most importantly for the history of doctrine, "It was primarily the Greek OT, not the Hebrew, over which the councils d liberated the great doctrines on which our Christian faith rests today."78

will show the influence of the LXX in early church thought. First, in the Arian Christological controversy, Proverbs 8:22 played a critical role. The OG/LXX reading, "The Lord *created* (ἔκτισέν) me," was used by Arians to argue for Jesus's creaturehood. Much could be said about the controversy, but what is most important

to note for our purposes is that the original discussion *did not* center on the *Hebrew* word, but focused on the *LXX translation*.79

le comes from Augustine, whose widely-cited phrase "I believe that I might understand," derives from the Old Latin which is a translation from the LXX. Isaiah 7:9 from the MT is trans- lated, "If you are not firm in faith, you will not be firm at all." In the LXX it is rendered, "And if you do not believe, neither shall you under- stand" (NETS). The LXX is more of an interpretation than a translation of the Hebrew, but its mark on Augustine and through him the rest of the church is seen in the frequency by which Augustine's phrase is cited.

es the context of thought from the first to the fourth centuries of the early church. In many places where the Vul- gate did not become the standard text, the LXX remained an influence for many more generations. The LXX is even still the official OT of the Greek Orthodox Church. If we are to properly understand religious thought throughout history, then, we must be familiar with the LXX.

can aid in historical understanding conce ns the repetition of events in history. It is often said that one must know history lest its failures are repeated. A robust understanding of the histo- ry of the LXX prepares the modern reader for what is frequently called the King James Only Controversy. An increasingly small number of evangelicals embrace the Authorized Version as an *inspired* text.80 The

77Metzger, "Important Early Translations of the Bible," 40.

78Jobes, "When God Spoke Greek," 221.

79The Vulgate, which was abnormal in the early church in translating from the Hebr as written within a generation of the Christological controversy, and it

apologetically translated קנָה to refer to *possession*, which was later reflected in the AV

rendering, "possessed." While such a translation can be defended, the LXX rendering is not outside the range of meaning for the term (e.g., the Vulgate translated the same verb root in Genesis 14:19 as "created") (Harrison, "Importance of the Septuagint for Biblical Studies [Part 1]," 350–51).

80For a defense of the King James Only movement see, D. A. Waite, *Defending the King James Bible*, 3rd ed. (Collingswood, NJ: The Old Paths Publications, 1998); G. A. Riplinger, *New Age Bible Versions: An Exhaustive Documentation of the Message, Men & Manuscripts Moving Mankind to the Antichrist's One World Religion*, 4th ed. (Monroe Falls, OH: Authorized Version Publications, 1993). For criticism of this position see,

history of the LXX shows that such a position is not a historical anoma- ly.

*The Letter of Aristeas* is still debated concerning its original purpose. Nevertheless, it is clear that the author intended to make the version authoritative. He did so in three ways. First, by suggesting that it was completed in only 72 days by 72 translators, the author implies God's assistance in the translation. Second, by its invocation of a curse on those who tamper with the text, the reader is reminded of Revelation 22:18–19. Finally, the *Letter* indicates that the Alexandrian Jews accept- ed the text as *equal* to the Hebrew.81

*er of Aristeas* stro implied, later writers brought to g eater clarity. Philo, for instance, indicated the LXX was translated by all 72 translators separately, who when they came together, discov- ered they all agreed perfectly. He even referred to the translators as "prophets."82 Irenaeus added that Ptolemy, fearing the translators would deliberately conceal elements of their religious writings, isolated each of the translators, commanding them to produce identical translations. According to Irenaeus, the result was that "the Scriptures were acknowl- edged as truly divine. For all of [the LXX translators] read out the common translation [which they had prepared] in the very same words and the very same names, from beginning to end, so that even the Gen- tiles present perceived that the Scriptures had been interpreted by the inspiration of God."83

y 5th Augustine taught that the LXX was inspired. He believed variance with the Hebrew either indicated the recovery of the original rendering or a new, inspired revelation.84 For example, the MT indicates that Nineveh would be overthrown in forty days, but the LXX indicated only three days. Which is correct? For Au- gustine, the Hebrew is historically correct, but the LXX is prophetically correct. Both numbers, 40 and 3, are from the same source, "one being given through the mouth of the prophet Jonah, the other through the prophecy of the seventy translators, and yet both being the utterance of the self-same Spirit."85 How do the two seemingly contradictory

James R. White and Mike Baird, *The King James Only Controversy: Can You Trust Modern Translations?* 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2009); D. A. Carson, *The King James Version Debate: A Plea for Realism*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979).

81Greenspoon, "Septuagint," 914.

82"They [the LXX translators] like men inspired, prophesied, not one saying one thing and another another, but every one of them employed the self-same nouns and verbs, as if some unseen prompter had suggested all their language to them" (*The Works of Philo Judaeus, the Contemporary of Josephus*, trans. C. D. Yonge [London: H. G. Bohn, 1855], 3:82).

83Irenaeus *Against Heresies* 3.21.2, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathe A.D. 325*, ed. A. Cleveland Coxe, American [C. Scribner's sons, 1905], 1:452).

84Jobes, "When God Spoke Greek," 227.

85Augustine, *City of God* 18.44, trans. Henry Bettenson (London: Penguin

readings interact? Augustine answers: “They are saying, in effect, ‘In the forty days look for him in whom you will be able to find the three days also. You will discover the former in his ascension, the latter in his res- urrection.’”86 In sum, “both sources should be employed as authorita tive, since both are one, and both are *inspired by God*.”87

Augustine’s position, arguing that “it is one thin to be a prophet, another to be a translator. The former through the Spirit, foretells things to come; the latter must use his learning and facility in speech to translate what he understands.”88 Luther, who would influence the translation philosophy of many after him, also be- lieved the LXX to be less than inspired, highlighting the human limitations of the translators: “[They seem] not to ha e been duly qualified for the magnitude of the work they undertook.”89

controversy over the LXX and its inspiration reflects deeply on modern evangelicalism, for the claim of Septuagintal inspiration fre quently arose due to a high view of Scripture. Thus, the LXX provides a helpful historical aid in modern discussion, for it is an imperfect transla- tion approved by God (because quoted by Jesus and the apostles). Thus, while we should expect no perfect English translation of the Scripture (just as there was no perfect Greek translation), we can have confidence that God still works through imperfect representations of the original.90

## CONCLUSION

Though I agree with Peters that “an exposure to the diverse read- ings of the Septuagint serves the necessary, though sometimes disquiet- ing, function of shattering simplistic notions concerning the origins of the biblical text,”91 evangelicals must not shy away from such study. Evangelical faith is an informed faith, and it is a faith that can uniquely contribute to the community of scholarship. And if what I have argued above is correct, then there are plenty of reasons evangelicals should desire to be involved in LXX research.

ralizes that “when com red with scholarly work on the Hebrew OT and the Greek NT, work on the Septuagint has languished

Classics, 2004), 823.

86Ibid.

87Ibid., emphasis added.

88Jerome, “Prologue to Genesis,” 3:516.

89Martin Luther, *The Creation: A Commentary on the First Five Chapters of Genesis*, 4.7, Luther Still Speaking (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1858), 348.

90The LXX is unique from modern translations in one important sense; since some of the citations of it are present in the NT, those citations are inspired. Yet, they are no inspired because they are in the LXX; rather, they are inspired because they are in the NT.

91Peters, “Why Study the Septuagint?” 181.

behind."92 Yet this is, as Edward Glenny has recently said, "a great time to study the Septuagint."93 The resources available to modern scholars are unparalleled.94 In sum, the field is white already to harvest, but there are too few laborers—especially among evangelicals.

92Porter, "Septuagint/Greek Old Testament," 1105.

93Glenny, "Septuagint and Biblical Theology," 263.

94The Göttingen critical text is almost complete. Jobes and Silva have provided an excellent introductory text (Karen H. Jobes and Moisés Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 2nd ed. [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005]). There are at least two groups publishing commentaries on the OT from the LXX (Society of Biblical Literature Commentary on the Septuagint and The Septuagint Commentary Series). There are study groups in both SBL and ETS on the Septuagint, and the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies publishes a journal as well as a monograph series.

## 15. Zondervan

**Septuagint** sep´*too*-uh-jint. This term, derived from Latin *Septuaginta* ("Seventy") and commonly abbreviated with the corresponding Roman numeral LXX, is the traditional (though imprecise) name given to the primary Greek version of the Hebrew Bible. The LXX appears to have been the first translation made of the OT or of any literary work of comparable size into another language, and it thus marks a milestone in human culture.

For biblical scholarship, the LXX is of great importance in several areas: (1) *OT textual criticism*—it attests to an ancient form of the Hebrew text that is often different from, and sometimes more reliable than, the standard Masoretic text (MT); (2) *OT hermeneutics*—it represents the earliest known interpretation of the Hebrew Bible (aside from interpretative features within the OT itself); (3) *NT language*—it is a major source for our understanding of Hellenistic Greek; (4) *NT hermeneutics*—it was used extensively by the NT writers and evidently influenced their formulation of Christian teaching. This article treats not only the LXX (in the stricter sense of the term) but also the other Greek versions of the Hebrew Bible produced in antiquity. (What follows is an abridgment of the initial chapters in K. H. Jobes and M. Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint* [2000], to which the reader is referred for additional information.)

I. Introduction
II. Terminology
III. Origin

IV. Later Greek translations
A. Aquila
B. Symmachus
C. Theodotion
D. Other versions
V. Recensions
A. The Hexaplaric recension
B. The Lucianic recension
VI. Ancient witnesses
VII. Modern editions

## I. Introduction.

The Bible contains ancient writings that have been continuously read from the time of its authors until our own. The first and oldest part of the Bible was written originally in Hebrew (except for the following passages written in ARAMAIC: Ezra 4:8—6:18; 7:12–26; Jer. 10:11; Dan. 2:4—7:28). The abiding importance of these sacred writings—first to the Jews and later to the Christians—demanded that throughout history they be translated into the languages of the peoples who received them as Scripture.

After the ANE was conquered by ALEXANDER THE GREAT (c. 333 B.C.), the Jewish people found themselves living in the Hellenistic culture. Their religious values and ancient ways collided with Greek practices, philosophies, and language. Just as today most Jewish people live outside of Israel, so it was during the Hellenistic period. Because as a rule the Jews of the DIASPORA (Dispersion) who were scattered throughout the Mediterranean no longer spoke Hebrew, they needed to have the sacred writings in Greek, which had become the *lingua franca* of the Hellenistic world. Thus the Greek version of the Hebrew Bible became Scripture to the Greek-speaking Jewish communities in the Diaspora. Together with the Greek NT, it was later the Bible of most Christians during the first few centuries of [Vol. 5, p. 402] the church. The Greek version remains even today the canonical text for the Orthodox Christian tradition, which traces its heritage to the Byzantine church of the eastern empire.

Because of its widespread importance, numerous copies of the Greek Bible were produced by scribes in many places throughout the centuries. There are more surviving MSS of the Greek OT than there are of any other ancient Greek text except the NT. Counting both complete and fragmentary

MSS, nearly 2,000 handwritten copies of the Septuagint have survived. In comparison, there are only about 650 extant MSS of Homer's *Iliad*, the most popular work of antiquity, and fewer than 350 of the writings of the famous Greek tragedian, Euripides. For scholars interested in the complexities of textual criticism and the tendencies of scribes, the MSS of the Septuagint provide an enormous amount of material for study.

The LXX is written in the Koine, that is, the *common* Greek of the Hellenistic age, a form of the language that had developed from the classical Greek of 5th–Century ATHENS. For students of the GREEK LANGUAGE during the Hellenistic period, the LXX is a major source of information. Moreover, because it is a translation of a Hebrew text into Greek, it provides a unique opportunity for those interested in comparing original Greek writings to "translation" Greek.

The Greek version also has great value for the study of the Hebrew text. The issues surrounding this use of the version are quite complex, but the fact remains that the LXX was translated from some Hebrew text that was not identical to the Hebrew text we use today. That original Greek translation, which was produced much earlier than any surviving copy of the Hebrew Bible, is an indirect witness to its *Vorlage*, that is, to the Hebrew parent text from which it was translated. In theory, the LXX should allow scholars to reconstruct that earlier Hebrew text, though in practice this attempt is fraught with difficult problems.

Translation between any two languages, however, always involves a degree of interpretation. The translators who produced the Greek version of the Hebrew Bible were also interpreters who came to the text with the theological and political prejudices of their time and thus had to deal with hermeneutical issues similar to those we face today. Their translations were no doubt influenced, whether deliberately or subconsciously, by what they believed the Hebrew meant in light of their contemporary situation, which may or may not have been what the author of the Hebrew intended. Clearly, this is bad news to the textual critic, who wants to use the Greek version to reconstruct its Hebrew parent text. On the other hand, precisely because the LXX reflects the theological, social, and political interests of the translator, it provides valuable information about how the Hebrew Bible was understood and interpreted at the time the translators were working.

Subsequently, the LXX played a significant role in the Christian church. The Greek version, not the Hebrew Bible, was the primary theological and

literary context within which the writers of the NT and most early Christians worked. This does not mean that the NT writers were ignorant of the Hebrew Bible or that they did not use it. Since these authors were writing in Greek, however, they would naturally quote, allude to, and otherwise use the Greek version of the Hebrew Bible. This process is no different from that of a modern author writing, for instance, in Spanish, and quoting a widely used Spanish translation of the Bible.

Consequently, familiarity with the Greek OT cannot help but enlighten the student of the Greek NT. Biblical scholar Adolf Deissmann once wrote, "A single hour lovingly devoted to the text of the Septuagint will further our exegetical knowledge of the Pauline Epistles more than a whole day spent over a commentary" (*The Philology of the Greek Bible* [1908], 12). The connection can be illustrated at several levels. In the first place, the LXX provided some of the vocabulary that the NT writers drew upon. They often use terms or phrases that are found in the LXX and that were not in common usage in the first century (e.g., ***pasa sarx***, "all flesh," Lk. 3:6). In such cases, they may be borrowing the terms from the Greek OT to affect a "biblical" style. The LXX certainly left its mark in Greek just as the KJV has in English.

Second, the NT writers sometimes use expressions found in the LXX to draw the reader's mind to specific passages of OT Scripture. PAUL, for instance, uses the phrase "every knee shall bow" in Phil. 2:10 when he describes the ultimate exaltation of Christ. Clearly Paul is using vocabulary from the Greek of Isa. 45:23 not just to sound "biblical" but [Vol. 5, p. 403] rather to bring that passage to mind in order to identify Jesus Christ with God.

Third, the NT writers frequently—perhaps as many as 300 times—quote the Greek OT directly (see QUOTATIONS IN THE (NT)). This fact accounts for some of the differences readers note when comparing these citations with the corresponding OT passages. For example, in Heb. 11:21 dying JACOB is said to have worshiped leaning on the top of his *staff*, a reference to the Greek text of Gen. 47:31. In almost all English Bibles, however, Genesis says that Jacob worshiped at the top of the *bed*, which is indeed what the Hebrew MSS say. The reason for the discrepancy is that the Hebrew text used by the Greek translator of Genesis consisted only of consonants; the correct vowels were to be inferred by the reader from the context. The Hebrew noun in Genesis could be read as either ***maṭṭeh*** *H4751* ("staff") or ***miṭṭâ*** *H4753* ("bed"), and the Greek translator inferred that the

word "staff" was meant. Some centuries later, when vowel points were added to the Hebrew biblical texts, the noun in 47:31 was taken to mean "bed." (The NIV has translated 47:31 so as to agree with Heb. 11:21, presumably on the grounds that the traditional vowel-pointing of the Hebrew text is incorrect and that the Greek version preserves the correct sense. For a fuller treatment of this quotation, see M. Silva in *Scripture and Truth*, ed. D. A. Carson and J. W. Woodbridge [1983], 147–65.)

One must also appreciate that the continuity and development of thought between the OT and NT is of particular concern for BIBLICAL THEOLOGY. The LXX provides essential, but often overlooked, theological links that would have been familiar to Christians of the first century, but are not so obvious in the Hebrew version. No NT scholar can afford to ignore the LXX.

After NT times, the LXX, not the Hebrew text, was the Bible used by the early church fathers and councils for several centuries. As Christian doctrine on the nature of Christ and the TRINITY developed, discussion centered on the exegesis of key OT texts. Because most of the church fathers could not read Hebrew, exegetical debates were settled using the Greek OT. Some of the Greek words used to translate the OT had connotations associated with Greek culture and philosophy that were probably alien to the thought of the original Hebrew author. The simple fact that the Hebrew Scriptures existed in the Greek language and were read by people living in Greek culture led to exegesis by both Jewish and Christian interpreters (e.g., PHILO JUDAEUS and ARIUS, respectively) that was heavily influenced by Greek philosophy.

Of course, one must also consider that the Greek translator himself originally rendered the Hebrew in ways that were to some extent influenced by Greek culture and thought, making the text even more congenial to a later exegesis that would be similarly influenced. A good example is the LXX text of Prov. 8:22–31, which held a prominent place in the early discussions about the nature of Christ and his place in the Trinity. In this passage, wisdom is personified as the first of the Lord's works prior to the creation of the universe.

Primarily because of the opening verses of the Gospel of John, JESUS CHRIST became associated with this divine WISDOM (***sophia*** *G5053*) or rationality (***logos*** *G3364*; see LOGOS). In Greek philosophy, however, the Greek concept of an impersonal divine wisdom permeating the universe was very prominent, and so the nature of Jesus Christ and his relationship to God

the Father had to be carefully delineated. Many early theologians, such as ORIGEN and TERTULLIAN, all used this passage from the Greek Proverbs in their discussions of the relationship between the Son and the Father. Subsequently Arius, a Christian presbyter of ALEXANDRIA (died 336), argued on the basis of the Greek of Prov. 8 that the Son was a created being, not coeternal with the Father. Subtle differences between the Greek and Hebrew worked in favor of Arius's argument, which led to years of intense debate. (The exegesis of this passage was settled by the Council of Nicaea in 325, when the Arian controversy was pronounced a heresy. For further details, see Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, 5 vols. [1971–89], 1:191–210.)

This example is only one of many that show that the doctrines of orthodox Christianity were hammered out with exegetical appeals to an OT that was written in Greek, not Hebrew. While it is true that no point of orthodox Christian doctrine rests on the Greek text in contradiction to the Hebrew, it [Vol. 5, p. 404] is also true that the LXX text was the Word of God for the church in its first few centuries. Moreover, the Eastern Orthodox churches, such as the Greek, Russian, and Syrian, inherited the Greek text as their Bible. Traditionally, the Orthodox churches have considered the Greek version to be divinely inspired (and even in some sense to have superseded the Hebrew text), although this is a matter of debate among Orthodox scholars today.

## II. Terminology.

Strictly speaking, there is really no such thing as "*the* Septuagint." Most translations of the Hebrew Bible are characterized by unity throughout. Not so with the LXX, which was produced by many people unknown to us, over two or three centuries, and almost certainly in more than one location. Consequently, the Greek OT does not have the unity that the term "the Septuagint" might imply.

Because the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible has such a long and complicated history, the name Septuagint is used to refer to several quite different things. In its most general sense, the term is used to refer to any or all ancient Greek translations of the Hebrew Bible, just as one might now refer in general to the "English Bible," with no particular translation in mind. This is the sense in which the term is used in the title of this article, which deals with the ancient Greek version(s) of the Hebrew Bible. Often, the term

is also used to refer to a particular printed edition of the Greek text, whether that edition reproduces the text of a MS or prints a reconstructed text.

Given these typical uses of the term "LXX," one might understandably, though mistakenly, infer that the Greek translation found in a given ancient MS or modern edition is a homogeneous text produced in its entirety at one point in time. In fact, no such homogeneity exists in any collection of the Greek books of the OT. Each edition—whether the ancient, hand-copied Codex Vaticanus or the modern, printed Rahlfs edition—is an amalgam, with each section of the Bible having a long and separate textual history.

The books of the Hebrew Bible were originally translated independently into Greek by different translators over several centuries. What we call *books* were at that time written on individual SCROLLS. A scroll, typically no longer than 35 ft., could not contain the Greek version of the Hebrew Bible in its entirety. Usually each book was written on a separate scroll. A different format, the CODEX, came into use in the second century of our era. This format made it possible to bind the texts from many separate scrolls into one volume, giving a false impression of homogeneity. Just because the texts were bound together did not mean they shared a common origin. In fact, there was no one uniform Greek version of the entire Hebrew Bible, just individual scrolls that had been copied from other scrolls through the ages. For instance, the Greek text of Genesis in some medieval codex may have been copied from a MS that was produced in the 1st cent. of our era and that contained the translation originally made in the 3rd cent. B.C. in Alexandria, while the Greek text of Esther *bound in the same codex* may have been copied from a MS produced in the 4th cent. of our era and containing a translation made in the 1st cent. B.C. in Jerusalem.

The particular collection of Greek texts of the biblical books that comprise the earliest one-volume Bibles, such as CODEX SINAITICUS or CODEX VATICANUS, occurred usually by the historical happenstance of whatever texts were at hand, irrespective of their origin and character. Therefore, whatever one may say about the history and characteristics of the Greek text of one biblical book may or may not be true of the others, even though they are found bound together in one codex. And because modern critical editions of the LXX are based on the ancient MSS, the same misleading appearance of homogeneity exists today.

When one enters the highly specialized world of textual criticism, the name Septuagint takes on a more precise and technical sense. It may be

used specifically to distinguish the oldest Greek translation from subsequent translations and revisions of the Greek. If the term is used in this narrower sense, it refers only to the original Greek version of the PENTATEUCH, for that was the first part of the Hebrew Bible translated in the 3rd cent. B.C. The remaining books of the Hebrew canon were translated by different people in different places during the next two centuries. However, it has become customary, by extension, to use the term Septuagint with reference to the complete Greek canon of the Hebrew Bible.

[Vol. 5, p. 405]

It is probably better to refer to the original translation of books other than the Pentateuch as the *Old Greek* (OG) so as to distinguish it from the original translation of the Pentateuch as well as from the later revisions and new translations. (When referring to these initial Greek translations of the Hebrew Bible as a whole, some scholars prefer the combined abbreviation *lxx/og* as a continual reminder of the diversity that characterizes the corpus.) However, when the Greek version of a biblical book survives in more than one form, it is not always possible to know with certainty which is the older. Nor is it possible to know for sure if the oldest surviving form was in fact the first Greek translation made of that book. Therefore, even the term Old Greek is not totally satisfactory. Unless the context requires a distinction, this article uses the abbreviation LXX in its general sense.

The scope of modern LXX studies extends beyond the CANON of the Hebrew Bible. It includes texts from the Hellenistic period that are not translations from the Hebrew at all, but rather Jewish writings composed in Greek, such as 3 and 4 MACCABEES and the WISDOM OF SOLOMON. Some other books, such as JUDITH, survive as complete copies only in Greek, even though they probably were translated from a Semitic source that is no longer extant. See APOCRYPHA. These texts may also be in mind when the name Septuagint is used.

The reader is cautioned, therefore, to pay particular care to the context in which the term is used, even by the same writer. Unfortunately, some writers use the term carelessly and equivocally, and the inevitable confusion that results from such ambiguity has led LXX scholars to call for standardizing the terminology. This may be easier said than done, however, for the ambiguities of the term go back to antiquity.

## III. Origin.

The earliest extant account of the original Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible is found in the *Letter of Aristeas* (see ARISTEAS, LETTER OF). This document purports to be a lengthy, personal letter from a man named Aristeas to his "brother" (or friend) Philocrates. It describes, among other things, how the Jewish TORAH was first translated from Hebrew into Greek for the great library of the Egyptian king PTOLEMY Philadelphus (285–247 B.C.) in ALEXANDRIA. Copies of this "letter" survive in about two dozen medieval MSS, the earliest of which dates to the 11th cent. The length and character of the document, and the fact that it apparently was so widely copied and circulated, suggests that it was not personal correspondence from one person to another, but was intended as an "open" letter to a wider audience.

According to the author, the king's librarian requested the high priest of the temple in Jerusalem to send translators with the Hebrew Torah scrolls to Alexandria. The high priest complied, sending six men from each of the twelve tribes of Israel, that is, seventy-two translators, with a large escort carrying gifts for the king. (The twelve tribes of Israel had long before been dispersed, so if there is any truth to this unlikely story, the number of people sent would have been merely a symbolic gesture.) Aristeas was among the envoys.

The entourage from Jerusalem was welcomed to Alexandria with a royal banquet lasting several days, during which time the king and the envoys from the high priest discussed questions of theology and ethics. Finally, the translators were escorted to an island called Pharos, connected by a causeway to Alexandria. Working there for seventy-two days, they produced the first Greek translation of the Pentateuch. When the translation was complete, it was read to an assembly of the Jews of Alexandria, who enthusiastically received it and gave the translators a great ovation. The Jews asked the king's librarian to make a copy of the new translation for use in their community. To ensure that the original words of the translators would be preserved in perpetuity, the priests and elders pronounced a curse on anyone who should later change the text in any way.

Scholars today believe that this letter was written, not at a time contemporaneous with the events it describes, but in the 2nd cent. B.C., to defend JUDAISM in general and the Greek version in particular. During the

conflict in Judaism over hellenization, some Jews embraced the Greek language and culture while others resisted such acculturation on religious principle. It is also very likely that the Greek translation of the Pentateuch did not enjoy universal favor among the Jews. A hundred years or more after the translation was produced, the *Letter of Aristeas* was probably written to address this situation. Claiming that the translation was made [Vol. 5, p. 406] from the Jerusalem scrolls under circumstances that paralleled the giving of the law on Sinai, the author seeks to give the Greek version of the Scriptures used in Alexandria authority and veneration, such as the Hebrew texts in Jerusalem enjoyed.

Even though the authenticity of the letter should be rejected, some of its information is probably reliable. The first Greek translation of the Hebrew Torah would have been needed by Jews living in the Diaspora during the Hellenistic period (i.e., after Alexander's conquest in 333 B.C.). Even earlier, during the Persian period, significant communities of Aramaic-speaking Jews already lived in Egypt: papyri from ELEPHANTINE show an established Jewish community there as early as 495 B.C. After Alexander's conquest of the Persian empire, Alexandria became home to a large Greek-speaking Jewish population. It is therefore likely that the Pentateuch was first translated into Greek by or for the Alexandrian Jews during the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus in the middle of the 3rd cent. (The historical and prophetic books of the Hebrew Bible were prob. translated into Greek during the following century, but we do not know where or by whom.)

The language of the translation bears the marks of the Greek spoken in Egypt, and it seems improbable that it would have been produced by a large group of Palestinian scholars. It is much more reasonable to believe that a handful of Greek-speaking Alexandrian Jews were responsible for it. As for the claim that the translation was based on Hebrew scrolls brought from Jerusalem, we have no clear evidence to refute it, but few scholars accept its validity. More difficult to assess is the role supposedly played by the king's librarian. Many scholars, thinking it unlikely that the Greeks themselves would have taken the initiative to produce a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, reject this element of the story as pure embellishment. On the other hand, some specialists are hesitant to dismiss altogether the possibility that court officials may have had an active interest in gaining access to the formative documents of the large and significant Jewish population. The *Letter of*

*Aristeas* may reflect some reliable information concerning the Ptolemaic court's support, if not sponsorship, of the translation.

But the questions do not end here. Even if the Greeks had some involvement in this project, surely the interests of the Jewish population itself must have been prominent. Was the translation then undertaken because of the needs of the Greek-speaking worshipers who no longer understood Hebrew? Or was it done rather for the academic purposes of Hebrew students and scholars who would be more likely to make sense of the translation's many difficult, literal renderings? It may well be that all of these concerns, and perhaps others as well, were motivating factors in the production of the LXX.

The very intensity with which the *Letter of Aristeas* defends the legitimacy of the translation raises an additional question. The great Hebraist of a previous generation, Paul Kahle (*The Cairo Geniza*, 2nd ed. [1959], chap. 3), argued forcefully that the author of this document was in fact defending the Alexandrian version *against competing Greek translations* (for a refutation of some of Kahle's arguments see the articles by D. W. Gooding and G. Zuntz reprinted in *Studies in the Septuagint: Origins, Recensions, and Interpretations*, ed. S. Jellicoe [1974], 158–80, 208–25). Most scholars, following the lead of Paul de Lagarde in the 19th cent., have generally believed that there was only one initial Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, and that the recovery of that "Proto-Septuagint" (*Ur-Septuaginta*) is the great task at hand. Kahle insisted, however, that originally simultaneous Greek translations were produced over a period of time, in a manner not unlike that of the Aramaic TARGUMS, and that the *Letter of Aristeas* sought to impose the authority of one such translation over the other ones. Although Kahle's theories created a heated controversy during his lifetime, relatively few scholars were persuaded by them. Lagarde's position, with some modifications, has been confirmed by later investigation and functions as the working assumption for most specialists (see J. W. Wevers in *Bulletin of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies* 21 [1988]: 23–34, esp. 24–26).

Writers subsequent to the *Letter of Aristeas* add little information of substance. PHILO JUDAEUS, a Jewish Alexandrian philosopher who lived in the 1st cent. of our era, embellished the story of the origin of the Greek version of the Bible. Probably relying on an earlier tradition, he writes that the translators worked independently of each other, yet produced the same

translation word-for-word [Vol. 5, p. 407] through divine dictation. Philo believed that the Greek translation had been divinely inspired just as the original Hebrew had been.

By the 2nd cent. there is evidence of an alternate Jewish tradition, found in rabbinical material, that gives the number of translators who went to Alexandria as seventy, not seventy-two (*Sepher Torah* 1:8; another tradition gives the number of translators as five). This detail is probably intended to justify the claim that the Greek version too, like the Hebrew, was divinely inspired. Seventy ELDERS of Israel accompanied MOSES to Mount Sinai and saw God (Exod. 24:1–2, 9–11); moreover, seventy elders received a share of the Spirit that was in Moses (Num. 11:10–25). By numbering the translators of the Torah as seventy, the tradition portrays them as assistants to Moses working centuries later to administer the Law. The name *Septuagint* reflects this tradition. It first appears in Greek (***hoi hebdomēkonta***, "the seventy") in the mid-second century and thereafter only in Christian writers, such as JUSTIN MARTYR, IRENAEUS, EUSEBIUS, and CHRYSOSTOM. The term was most often used by these writers to refer in general to the entire Greek OT, without distinguishing its various revisions and forms.

In the 3rd cent. the use of the term became even more confused. As will be noted below, ORIGEN took the various Greek texts in existence at his time and produced a recension that was "corrected" to the Hebrew text available to him. After his work, the name Septuagint began to be used to refer both to the Greek text he had used as his base *and* to the text that resulted from his revisions! The term is found in colophons in biblical MSS as early as the 4th cent. It is not known if such a notation was used to distinguish the text of these MSS from other Greek versions known to the scribes at that time, or was intended simply to identify the proper textual pedigree of the MS. In any case, the confusion resulting from the imprecise and ambiguous use of the name Septuagint today reflects the long and complicated history of the term and the texts to which it refers.

### IV. Later Greek translations.

Early Christian writers sometimes referred to alternate Greek renderings found in translations other than that of "the Seventy." These references are often vague, but we can find many passages where they specifically identify translations attributed to three scholars: Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion. Sometimes they are referred to as a group, "the Three

(Translators)." Today they are often called "the Later Versions" or (for reasons to be discussed below) "the Hexaplaric Versions." None of these works has survived, except for a few fragments, but we have valuable evidence in numerous patristic quotations, as well as in marginal notations in MSS. With regard to their origin, these later translations are to be clearly distinguished from "the Septuagint," but as we shall see, the textual transmission of all these documents eventually became closely intertwined.

The rise of Christianity from JUDAISM in the 1st cent. of our era is usually given as the reason new Greek versions of the Hebrew Bible were needed. The Christian church first flourished in Jerusalem among Jews who recognized Jesus of Nazareth as the MESSIAH and who interpreted the death and resurrection of Jesus in light of the sacred Scriptures of the Judaism of their day. When Christianity spread outside the borders of Palestine, it was apparently the Greek version of the Jewish Scriptures from which the apostles, especially Paul, preached Christ. It is usually said that the resulting tension between Christians and Jews, both of whom used the Greek Bible but understood it so differently, was the primary reason for the synagogue to abandon the "Septuagint" to the church and to produce a new translation of the Hebrew texts.

While the early relationship between Christians and Jews no doubt played a major role in the history of the Greek versions, there was another factor that should not be overlooked. The DEAD SEA SCROLLS provide indisputable evidence that at the turn of the era, before the birth of Christianity, the text of the Hebrew Bible (for at least some of the books) circulated in more than one form. One of these, however, emerged as *the* standard text by the beginning of the 2nd cent., apparently supplanting all previous Hebrew texts. This situation alone would provide the need for a new Greek translation faithful to the newly standardized Hebrew text.

In addition, it is now clear that, even apart from Jewish-Christian polemics, there were different ideas about what a translation should look like. The discoveries in the Judean Desert have shed light [Vol. 5, p. 408] on this issue as well. One of the more significant MSS found there is actually a Greek translation of the Minor Prophets. Dated no later than the 1st cent. of our era, it appears to be a revision of the "Septuagint" for those books of the Bible. This find provides clear evidence that prior to the 2nd–cent. debates among Jews and Christians, more than one Greek version of the Bible was in circulation.

A. Aquila.

According to ancient testimony, Aquila was a Gentile who had been commissioned by his relative, the Roman emperor HADRIAN, to superintend the rebuilding of Jerusalem (renamed Aelia Capitolina) around the year 128. While there, he became a Christian, but later converted to Judaism and studied under prominent rabbis. Aquila eventually undertook a new Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible that (a) was based on the recently standardized Hebrew text; (b) sought to correct perceived deficiencies in the LXX, including those that affected Jewish-Christian disputes; and (c) adopted a very literalistic approach that possibly reflected certain rabbinic methods of interpretation. Aquila's work, completed perhaps around the year 140, was received enthusiastically by the Greek-speaking Jewish communities and remained the form trusted by the synagogue well into the 6th cent. and beyond.

The literal character of Aquila's translation has not always been adequately understood. Some scholars have given the impression that Aquila was either incompetent or eccentric, but the facts suggest otherwise. To begin with, we should note that Aquila allowed himself some flexibility in the area of syntax. Instead of representing Hebrew grammatical forms in one-to-one fashion, he would sometimes use the resources of the Greek language to provide stylistic variation.

In the area of vocabulary, undoubtedly, Aquila's policy was to represent every detail in the most consistent fashion, even at the cost of acceptable Greek. For example, Ps. 22:12b (MT 22:13b; LXX 21:13b) says, "strong [bulls] of Bashan *surrounded* me." The Hebrew verb here, ***kittĕrûnî*** (piel of ***kātar*** *H4193*), happens to be related to the noun ***keter*** *H4195* ("turban"). Because this Hebrew noun is elsewhere rendered with the Greek ***diadēma*** *G1343* ("band, diadem"), Aquila boldly makes up a new Greek verb, ***diadēmatizō***, so that his translation would carry over into English as, "strong ones of Bashan diademized me." We must not think that Aquila misunderstood the meaning of the Hebrew verb or that he was simply being reckless. He was clearly guided by the principle of providing one-for-one lexical correspondences, and he did so even in the case of particles and certain word-endings.

Almost surely, Aquila's method was intended as an aid to biblical exegesis, perhaps for people who had a minimal knowledge of Hebrew. (Cf.

the way that "literal" English translations of the Bible are sometimes advertised as the next best thing to knowing Greek and Hebrew.) There is also reason to believe that he may have been following a specific rabbinic approach to interpretation, although this point is disputed. In any case, we should remember that some distinguished writers, even today, argue that translations ought to preserve both the content *and the form* of the original. And for modern biblical scholars interested in reconstructing the Hebrew *Vorlage* or parent text of a Greek translation, Aquila's consistent method makes that task simpler.

### B. Symmachus.

Little is known about the origins of the Greek version attributed to Symmachus. He is said by some sources to have been an EBIONITE Christian who produced the translation around the year 170 of our era. A major recent study identifies Symmachus as a Jew (not an Ebionite) who undertook this task around the year 200 for the Jewish community in Caesarea of Palestine (A. Salvesen, *Symmachus in the Pentateuch* [1991], 296–97, building on the work of A. van der Kooij).

Scholars who have studied what remains of this translation agree that the work was carefully done. Alison Salvesen has examined the exegetical features of Symmachus's version of the Pentateuch and its syntax and vocabulary. She concludes that Symmachus produced a Greek translation of the Hebrew text of the Pentateuch that "combined the best Biblical Greek style, remarkable clarity, a high degree of accuracy regarding the Hebrew, and the rabbinic exegesis of his day: it might be described as a Greek Targum, or Tannaitic Septuagint" (ibid., 297; the term TANNAIM refers to rabbinic authorities during the first two centuries A.D.).

On the basis of syntactical and lexical characteristics found also in the other Greek versions, [Vol. 5, p. 409] Salvesen concludes that Symmachus "certainly knew Aquila," "probably knew Theodotion," and it seems "likely" to her that he also knew of the LXX as he produced his translation for the Jewish community of Caesarea in Palestine around the year 200. In short, Symmachus "aimed to produce a translation in clear Greek which accurately reflected the sense of the Hebrew original. His respect for the LXX is evident: he revised it in the spirit of the original translators of the Pentateuch, ironing out their lexical inconsistencies and inaccuracies, yet preserving smooth diction where he found it and extending it where it was absent" (ibid., 26; L.

Greenspoon [in *ABD*, 6:251] believes that Symmachus's work is primarily a revision of Theodotion).

Another specialist, similarly, states that Symmachus's work on the Major Prophets is characterized by clarity (representing Hebrew idioms with natural Greek expressions), variety (one Hebrew term may be represented with several Greek terms), and coherence. Although the translator allowed himself the use of exegetical expansions, his approach was sober. In general, the translation stands mid-way between Aquila and the LXX. (See J. González Luis, *La versión de Símaco a los profetas mayores* [1981], 367–68. Note, however, that in OT books where the LXX is very literal, Symmachus renders more freely than either the LXX or Aquila.)

### C. Theodotion.

The Greek translation attributed to Theodotion is especially problematic. According to the traditional view, Theodotion was a convert to Judaism who lived in EPHESUS in the late 2nd cent. Taking the existing Greek version as his base, he revised it toward the standard Hebrew text. His work—which may fairly be characterized as "literal," but not excessively so—includes features reminiscent of Aquila. One peculiarity is his penchant for transliterating (i.e., using Greek letters to represent the sound of the Hebrew) rather than translating certain words, such as difficult terms for animals and plants. His translation of the book of Daniel supplanted that of the "Septuagint" (better, the Old Greek), which was widely regarded as defective.

One of the problems with this description is that certain renderings once thought distinctive to Theodotion are now known to have existed a century or two before he lived. Note, for example, the reference to Dan. 6:22 (MT and LXX, 6:23) in Heb. 11:33. Although the author of Hebrews is otherwise heavily dependent on the "Septuagint," this passage reflects Theodotion's rendering, "[God] shut the mouths of the lions" (***enephraxen ta stomata tōn leontōn***), rather than the Old Greek, which says, "God saved me from the lions" (***sesōke me ho theos apo tōn leontōn***). This phenomenon led to speculation about the existence of a "proto-Theodotion" (*Ur-Theodotion*) and recent discoveries have confirmed the view that, for at least parts of the Hebrew Bible, a translation very similar to Theodotion's was already in use in the 1st cent. B.C. For a variety of reasons, most scholars now prefer to speak of *Kaige*-Theodotion, meaning by that term a well-defined, pre-Christian revision of the Old Greek. (One of its characteristics is the use of Gk. ***kaige*** to

render Heb. ***gam*** *H1685* [with or without the conjunction ***w***]. It is also thought that this revision became the basis for the work of both Aquila and Symmachus.) The work of the historical Theodotion may then be viewed as a later updating of the revision.

Also under debate is the question of Daniel-Theodotion in particular. Some have argued that the characteristics of this translation do not fit those found in materials otherwise attributed to Theodotion. Moreover, doubts have been raised about the usual view that Daniel-Theodotion is a revision of the Old Greek. (See A. Schmitt in *BZ* 36 [1992]: 1–29; T. McLay, *The OG and Th Versions of Daniel* [1996].) These and other questions will continue to occupy scholars for years to come.

### D. Other versions.

In addition to "the Three," other attempts were made to translate parts of the Hebrew Bible into Greek. Some church fathers, for example, make reference to ***ho Hebraios***, an ambiguous term that in some contexts appears to mean, "the Hebrew translator." One also finds quite a few references to "the Syrian" and nearly fifty to "the Samariticon." There is little that can be said with confidence about these versions. Moreover, as we shall see in the next section, Origen was familiar with three anonymous translations that have come to be known as Quinta, Sexta, and Septima. Of these, the Quinta is best attested, but not sufficiently to give us a complete picture.

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## V. Recensions.

We have good reason to believe that by the middle of the 1st cent. B.C. or even earlier, the whole Hebrew Bible, with the possible exception of one or two books, had been translated into Greek. In the case of Judges, Daniel, and Esther (as well as Tobit, Susanna, and Judith, books not included in the Hebrew canon), two quite different Greek forms are found among surviving MSS. Most contemporary scholars believe that only one "original" Greek translation was made of each book prior to the Christian era, and that whatever differences are found between surviving texts of the same book reflect a revision of the Greek. In any case, by the turn of the era, at least one Greek translation of virtually every book of the Hebrew Bible was in circulation among Greek-speaking Jews.

In the past, scholars have made a fairly sharp distinction between two types of work produced subsequent to the "original" Septuagint: (a) new Greek translations of the Hebrew Bible, that is, primarily the three versions made by Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion; and (b) major recensions (systematic revisions) of the Septuagint itself. Following this traditional understanding, in the previous section we treated "the Three" as independent works to be distinguished from the LXX. Here, however, we focus again on the LXX as the original Greek version and ask questions about its transmission and revisions.

Unfortunately, the distinction between a revision and a new translation is very difficult to define clearly. After all, scholars today speak of *Kaige*-Theodotion as a revision, and even the work of Aquila is sometimes described this way. It remains true, however, that "the Three" were historically perceived, and probably intended, as new works more or less in competition with the LXX, whereas the "recensions" (Origen's in particular) were meant to provide reliable editions of the LXX itself.

The usual starting-point for a discussion of the recensions is a well-know comment by JEROME (c. 340–420), the most knowledgeable biblical scholar of his day. In his preface to Chronicles, Jerome complained that the Christian world was in conflict over three forms *(trifaria varietas)* of the LXX text: (a) one in Egypt, attributed to Hesychius; (b) a second dominant from Constantinople to Antioch and attributed to Lucian; and between them (c) Origen's (Hexaplaric) recension, used in Palestine. We know nothing about Hesychius, and scholars have been unsuccessful in identifying a Hesychian recension among the MSS (although for most biblical books there is such a thing as an Egyptian form of the text, which may be the basis for Jerome's comment). For all practical purposes, therefore, a description of the Christian recensions must be limited to those attributed to Origen and to Lucian of Antioch.

### A. The Hexaplaric recension.

The most important work on the text of the Greek OT was done by Origen, the Christian theologian of Alexandria (c. 185 to c. 254). After heading up the Christian catechetical school in Alexandria, Origen eventually settled in Palestine, in the city of CAESAREA. During this period he undertook the massive project of comparing the Greek versions known to him with the Hebrew text of his day, which apparently was close to what has come to us

as the MT. Most of what is known about this work comes from two brief descriptions by Origen himself and from the writings of later church fathers who saw the work. Aware of the differences between the LXX and the Hebrew text, he set out to produce an edition that would take those variations into account. To accomplish his task he had the available texts written in parallel columns. For most of the OT he needed to use six columns, the feature from which the name of this work, the Hexapla, is taken. These columns contained the following: (1) the Hebrew text; (2) transliteration of the Hebrew text into Greek letters; (3) Aquila's translation; (4) Symmachus's translation; (5) the translation of the Seventy; (6) Theodotion's translation.

The purpose of the second column, containing a transliteration of the Hebrew into Greek letters, is somewhat puzzling. Some have suggested that it would have allowed a Greek speaker who did not know Hebrew to "read" (i.e., pronounce) the Hebrew Bible aloud, perhaps in the synagogue service. Others have thought that it enabled people who did know the Hebrew alphabet to vocalize a consonantal text. Before the early Middle Ages, the Hebrew text consisted of consonants only; the vowel sounds were to be inferred by the reader. Origen's second column may represent an earlier attempt to preserve [Vol. 5, p. 411] the correct pronunciation of the Hebrew vowels for people whose native language was Greek and whose knowledge of Hebrew was not extensive.

The translations in columns 3 (Aquila), 4 (Symmachus), and 6 (Theodotion) of the Hexapla were described above. Column 5 contained the "Septuagint," apparently the standard Greek translation used by the Christian church at the time. It is usually thought that this column included the corrections that Origen believed needed to be made in light of the Hebrew text. For example, as he compared the texts of Isaiah, he found that several lines of the Hebrew in Isa. 40 (vv. 7b–8)(7–8)vv. 7b–8a) were missing from the LXX, so he inserted that material into the text of the fifth column. According to some scholars, however, the fifth column contained an *uncorrected* text, so that the revised translation was really a separate, subsequent project for which the Hexapla was the preparatory work.

With regard to the order of the columns, we do not know Origen's rationale for it. One interesting theory is that of Harry M. Orlinsky (in *JQR* 27 [1936–37]: 146–47), who argued that Origen wanted "to provide his [Christian] contemporaries with the much needed facilities to learn Hebrew, and thus to be able to make use of all six columns of his Hexapla." After

supplying the Hebrew text and a second column to help the reader pronounce it, Origen next included Aquila's version because its word-for-word representation of the Hebrew provided a "crib" for the reader. Since Aquila is often unintelligible, however, Symmachus was needed to clarify it. "And equipped with the knowledge gained from the first four columns, the reader was ready to tackle the most important column of them all, the LXX."

For the book of Psalms and possibly a few other books, Origen was able to use three more Greek versions (but not more than two at a time), so for these books he expanded his work to eight columns—thus the term *Octapla*. Virtually nothing is known about the origin of these anonymous versions, referred to as the Quinta, the Sexta, and the Septima (that is, the fifth, sixth, and seventh versions). Since Origen included their text for only a few of the books, apparently none of these three versions contained the complete OT in the MSS available to Origen. The Quinta—the best attested of these three versions—is believed to have included 2 Kings, Job, Psalms, Song of Solomon, and the Minor Prophets.

Given the way modern scholars refer freely to the Hexaplaric texts, including the translations of Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus, readers may be left with the impression that fairly complete and reliable copies of these Greek texts exist. In fact, actual specimens are preserved only in (a) quotations by other ancient writers, (b) marginal notes in a handful of MSS, and (c) a very few fragments of copies of the Hexapla. The largest and most significant fragment of a copy of the Hexapla is the Mercati palimpsest in the Ambrosian Library of Milan. In 1896 Giovanni Mercati discovered that the underwriting of this MS contains five of the six columns of the Hexapla for about 150 verses of the Psalms. It apparently never did contain the first column, the Hebrew text. This copy was written in cursive letters around the 10th cent.

It is estimated that the Hexapla would have required about 6,000 pages bound in fifteen volumes. Such a massive work would probably never have been copied in its entirety. The only copy we know of was deposited in the library in Caesarea, Palestine, under the care of Pamphilus, the Christian martyr (c. 250–310). It was presumably destroyed with the library by Muslim Saracens in the 7th cent., if not earlier. The most comprehensive collection of Hexaplaric remains was published by F. Field over a century ago (*Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt sive veterum interpretum graecorum in totum Vetus Testamentum fragmenta*, 2 vols. [1875]). Since then, new fragments

have been discovered and studied. In 1994, a new project was begun at Oxford University to produce a new, electronic database containing all the surviving evidence.

For students of the LXX, however, the most important issue surrounding Origen's work is the character of his revised Greek text, which presumably was to be found in the fifth column. (As mentioned earlier, however, some scholars believe that this column contained an unrevised text and that Origen's own recension was published separately.) Origen had set out to produce a restored Greek version of the Bible for the church, and his corrected text quickly became the standard OT for the eastern churches from Antioch to Alexandria. It was copied and promoted by church leaders [Vol. 5, p. 412] for centuries. It, too, was called the "Septuagint," although it was no longer the same "Septuagint" text with which Origen had started out.

Origen himself states the purpose of this work in the *Letter to Africanus*, while the method he used is explained in his *Commentary on Matthew*. Apparently his purpose was to settle the dispute between Christians and Jews about the biblical texts. The Hexapla would show at a glance the Hebrew and all known Greek versions of it. Where the Greek Bible did disagree with the Hebrew Bible, Origen felt it important to "correct" the Greek version used *at that time* by the church to agree with the Hebrew version used *at that time* by the synagogue. In other words, Origen's purpose in constructing the Hexapla was quite different from the task of modern textual critics.

Origen may have been unaware that the Hebrew text available to him did not fully correspond with the Hebrew parent text from which the Greek translation had been produced. He could have easily been misled by the fact that in his day one standard Hebrew text already reigned supreme—the one that has survived today as the MT. We now know, however, that this text had undergone at least some development in the centuries before becoming standardized and that, for at least some books, the Hebrew Bible existed in more than one textual form. This means that the parent text from which any Greek translation had been made may or may not have had the same general form as the Hebrew text used by Origen. From the perspective of textual criticism, therefore, the basic assumption upon which he based his method was wrong. On the other hand, what looks like the work of a wrong-headed textual critic in the production of the Hexapla was actually the careful and valuable work of a well-intentioned Christian apologist.

As for his method, what Origen did was to compare the Greek of the LXX text, bit by bit, to the Hebrew text. The Greek sometimes had text that was not found in the Hebrew. Maybe these "pluses" had been in the Hebrew *Vorlage* from which the Greek was originally produced. Or maybe the pluses were introduced later as the Greek version developed independently of the Hebrew. In either case, out of respect for the sanctity of the LXX, Origen did not wish simply to delete Greek material not found in the Hebrew text. So he marked that material found in the LXX, but not in the Hebrew, with a special sign (an obelos). This and other signs used by Origen to mark his text are sometimes referred to as the Aristarchian symbols, because they had previously been used by an Alexandrian scholar named Aristarchus to do similar work on the various Greek texts of Homer.

Origen also found, however, that there was material in the Hebrew that was not in the LXX text. Perhaps the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the original translation did not contain the material, either because that Hebrew text was quite different from the one Origen had before him, or because the material was added to the Hebrew text after the Greek translation had been made. Or perhaps these minuses had originally been in the Greek translation, but were omitted, either intentionally or accidentally, at some later time. In any case, Origen felt compelled to insert Greek text to correspond to his Hebrew text. He did this by referring to the other existing Greek versions. If one of them contained a reading which corresponded well, in his opinion, to the Hebrew reading, he inserted that reading into the Greek text of the fifth column, placing it between special signs (an asterisk and a metobelos).

Through this process, Origen introduced isolated readings pulled from Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion (and possibly from Quinta, Sexta, and Septima) into the "Septuagint" text. Although he marked the original material, those markings were not always preserved. After Origen completed his work, the fifth column—that is, his recension of the LXX—was copied by itself and became the authorized Greek version of the Bible for the Christian church in Palestine. Because Origen's symbols were reproduced imperfectly or not at all, it became impossible to identify the origin of the various readings. It was this text that from that time forward was widely copied and circulated, which means that surviving MSS of the "Septuagint," with few exceptions, have a mixed text. Origen may have accomplished his goal successfully, but he greatly complicated the work of modern textual critics. In effect, the great task of LXX textual criticism is to reconstruct the pre-

Hexaplaric text, which means *undoing* Origen's labors so as to rediscover the form of the "Septuagint" in the 2nd cent.

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### B. The Lucianic recension.

Lucian of Antioch, born in Syria about the middle of the 3rd cent., died as a martyr in the year 312. He was a controversial theologian and a very influential biblical scholar. While the specific extent and nature of his textual work remain uncertain, he apparently updated an existing Greek text of both the OT and the NT. His revisions seem to have been primarily stylistic in nature. (Some scholars doubt that Lucian personally had anything to do with such revisions. For a survey of Lucian's life and work, see especially B. M. Metzger, *Chapters in the History of the New Testament* [1963], 1–41.)

The resulting Lucianic recension is also referred to as the Antiochene or Antiochian text, partly because Lucian may have used as his base the Greek text (perhaps Origen's fifth column?) that was then current in ANTIOCH OF SYRIA, partly because his revision was best known in that city. Lucian's recension is believed to be quoted in the writings of later Antiochene scholars such as Chrysostom and Theodoret. Moreover, isolated readings in the margins of several Greek and Syriac MSS are marked by the letter *l* (Gk. *lambda* and Syriac *lomadh*), and many of these readings should no doubt be recognized as Lucianic. With these clues, scholars have been able to identify, for most books, a large number of MSS as containing the Lucianic recension.

The revision commonly attributed to Lucian, or more vaguely to the Syrian church, is especially evident in the book of Psalms and in the NT. Indeed, most of the surviving MSS that include either of those two portions of the Greek Bible contain a revised text that is somewhat fuller—and stylistically more homogeneous—than other text forms. Whether or not Lucian was responsible for this work, it is generally agreed that the revision can be traced back to Antioch around the year 300. In addition to the Psalter, the Lucianic or Antiochene recension of the LXX is clearly attested in the Prophets and in some of the historical books (esp. Samuel-Kings-Chronicles). For the Pentateuch, however, scholars have been unable to identify a Lucianic text.

The most difficult and important problem related to this recension has to do with the presence of "Lucianic" readings attested long before Lucian lived. The Old Latin version (a translation from the Greek OT produced in the 2nd cent. of our era), as well as biblical quotations from such Latin fathers as Tertullian (who died early in the 3rd cent.) and Cyprian (d. 258), occasionally reflect a text that has some distinctives normally associated with the Antiochene text. Even earlier, Greek writers such as Justin Martyr (d. 165) and especially Josephus (c. 37–100) appear to have used a biblical text resembling that of the Antiochene recension. Most puzzling of all, one of the Hebrew fragments of Samuel discovered at QUMRAN (4QSama) also shows important points of contact with the Lucianic text.

Although some of the evidence has been disputed, many scholars speak of a proto-Lucianic text, meaning by that term an early revision of the LXX (better, OG) that brings it closer toward the Hebrew text. If so, the historical Lucian may have used such a revised text as the basis for his own revisions. This two-layer view helps to explain why the Lucianic or Antiochene text is characterized by two opposing tendencies: (a) on the one hand, the Lucianic MSS contain many readings that are closer to the Hebrew text than are those found in the other LXX MSS; (b) on the other hand, many of the stylistic changes in the Lucianic recension tend to move the Greek text away from the Hebrew. This problem is solved if "Lucian" made his stylistic alterations on a text that had earlier been adjusted toward the Hebrew.

### VI. Ancient witnesses.

While most of the surviving biblical texts have come to us through continuous transmission over the centuries, many other MSS have come to light only in modern times as a result of archaeological work. Indeed, ancient biblical texts dating as far back as the pre-Christian era have been found in archives of papyri excavated by archaeologists (see PAPYRUS). Manuscripts discovered in this way are extremely valuable, because they preserve the text as it existed when it was buried and have not been subjected to the vicissitudes of copying throughout subsequent centuries. The 4th–cent. CHESTER BEATTY Papyrus IV (= Rahlfs 961), one of the most significant finds, contains Gen. 9:1—44:22. Most papyrus fragments, however, contain small portions of biblical text—sometimes only a few letters or words. Therefore, while the [Vol. 5, p. 414] papyri provide very ancient and important testimony

of the text at the time they were buried, such little material makes it difficult to generalize about which form of the Greek Bible they represent.

Among important biblical papyri in Greek, the two earliest documents deserve special notice. Papyrus Fouad 266 (= Rahlfs 847 and 848), dated to c. 100 B.C., contains small portions of Deuteronomy that have great significance for the reconstruction of the text. Even earlier by perhaps half a century is PRyl. 458 (= Rahlfs 957), which contains about twenty scattered verses from Deut. 23–28. A few additional documents from the following two centuries have survived, and there are many other papyrus fragments of the Greek Bible that date from the 3rd cent. of our era and later.

One of the most dramatic papyrological finds began in 1947 when the first of the Judean Desert materials (popularly known as the DEAD SEA SCROLLS) came to light. Over the following decade, texts were found in eleven caves at Qumran, on the NW shore of the Dead Sea, and its environs. Most of these texts are in Hebrew and Aramaic, but Caves 4 and 7 preserved a small number of biblical texts in Greek. They are fragments of the Pentateuch, specifically Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. A wider area of the Judean wilderness produced other significant finds, especially an entire scroll of the Minor Prophets in Greek (not to be confused with the Minor Prophets scroll in *Hebrew* discovered at ***Murabba'at***). All of these documents are dated to the 1st cent. of our era or earlier.

In addition to the papyri, there are other early and important MSS written on PARCHMENT; they are referred to as *uncials* because they are written in the uncial or majuscule script (one should keep in mind, however, that the papyri are written in that same script). The three best-known biblical uncials contain the books of both the OT and the NT: CODEX VATICANUS (B), a 4th–cent. MS of exceptionally high quality that for most books of the OT has preserved a text relatively free from Hexaplaric influence; CODEX SINAITICUS (S or **א**), produced about the same time, and usually having a text similar to that of B (unfortunately, very little of the Pentateuch and of the historical sections has been preserved); and CODEX ALEXANDRINUS (**A**), copied in the 5th cent., which in spite of showing many signs of Hexaplaric influence, is very valuable (in the book of Isaiah, for example, it is our best witness).

Among other important uncials, the following are worth special attention. Codex *Colberto-Sarravianus* (G), dated about the year 400, preserves portions of Genesis to Judges; its significance lies in the fact that it

retains the Hexaplaric signs (although these are not always trustworthy). Codex *Coislinianus* (M), copied in the 7th cent., includes Genesis to 2 Samuel and the first chapters of 1 Kings (= 3 Reigns or 3 Kingdoms). Codex *Basiliano-Vaticanus* is an 8th or 9th cent. uncial with the double designation N-V; one portion (N) is in the Vatican Library and contains much of the Pentateuch (beginning with Lev. 13:59) and also the historical books; the other portion (V, also known as Codex Venetus) is in Venice and contains most of the poetic books, the Prophets, Tobit, Judith, and 1–4 Maccabees. Finally, Codex *Marchalianus* (Q) is a beautiful and very well preserved MS of the Prophets, dating from the 6th cent.; it contains an excellent text and includes the Hexaplaric signs.

Finally, well over 1,500 cursive or minuscule MSS of (parts of) the LXX have been preserved. Because they are later than the papyri and the uncials, they are relatively less important, but it would be a great mistake to ignore them. In the first place, a minuscule produced, say, in the 13th cent. may be a copy of an uncial dated many centuries earlier; if so, the text preserved in the minuscule is much more ancient than the MS itself. Moreover, the minuscules broaden our knowledge base significantly and thus help us to assess the value of the uncials in a more accurate way (a specific reading in a valuable uncial may be suspect if it is not broadly attested). Among interesting cursives, we may note especially the famous Chigi MS (88), which has two distinctions: it is one of the few MSS that include the Hexaplaric signs, and it is the only Greek MS that has preserved the Old Greek (rather than the Theodotionic) version of Daniel in its entirety. An important group of cursives that deserves attention is most frequently referred to by the lower-case letter designations boc2e2; these minuscules constitute our primary witnesses to the Lucianic or Antiochene text of Samuel-Kings.

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In addition to Greek MSS, we have the evidence of "secondary versions" and of ancient citations. As the Christian church expanded, the translation of the Bible into other languages became necessary. Such translations, *when made from the Greek* (rather than from the Hebrew), have great value to scholars who try to identify and date distinctive features of the different Greek versions. If a translation of the Greek into another language was made before Origen produced the Hexapla, that translation offers, at

least in theory, a witness to what the Greek text(s) looked like in the earliest centuries of the church. However, the secondary translation has also suffered the vicissitudes of time and transmission, which means that *its* original text must be established before we can use it to reconstruct its Greek *Vorlage*. It should also be kept in mind that these translations cannot always represent the Greek parent text precisely, and therefore their witness must be used with caution.

In the first few centuries of this era, Latin was the language not only of Italy but of other areas as well, including parts of N Africa. When the first translation of the Bible was made into Latin, it was made from a Greek text. This Latin version, referred to as the *Vetus Latina* or Old Latin (OL), was eventually replaced in the Latin-speaking church by Jerome's translation made in the early 5th cent. Jerome's work, known as the VULGATE, was a direct translation of the OT in Hebrew. In contrast, surviving MSS of the OL translation attest to a Greek *Vorlage*. Syriac (a member of the ARAMAIC family) was the language of a large and important section of the Christian church for many centuries. The *Syro-Hexaplar* (sometimes spelled Syro-Hexapla), an important secondary translation of Origen's Hexaplaric recension, was produced between the years 613 and 617. This work, translated from the Greek, is to be distinguished from the standard Syriac Bible, known as the Peshitta, which had been translated from the Hebrew about the 2nd cent. Translations of the LXX into Coptic (a late form of the Egyptian language) have been preserved in both the Sahidic and Bohairic dialects; they are an important witness to a valuable early Greek text used in Egypt. Other languages into which the LXX was translated include Arabic, Ethiopic, Armenian, Slavonic, and Georgian. Not many LXX scholars are competent in one or more of these languages, and relatively few MSS of these translations have survived.

Another secondary or indirect source for the Greek texts consists of quotations from the Bible surviving in ancient writings, especially the large corpus of the Christian fathers. In many ways, the value of these quotations for establishing the Greek text in use at that time is even more tenuous than consulting the secondary translations. This is because the writings of the fathers were themselves copied by scribes who may have edited the quotations to agree with the text known and used in their time and locale. Therefore, the textual critic must first establish how patristic writers originally quoted the passage. Moreover, one cannot be sure that they quoted a

biblical verse word-for-word. They may have paraphrased it or omitted short phrases that were irrelevant to their point. These complications notwithstanding, it appears that the quotations of certain fathers agree more closely with the readings of some surviving MSS than with others. For instance, Chrysostom and Theodoret, both of Antioch, are considered to be primary witnesses to the Antiochene text as revised by Lucian.

### VII. Modern editions.

With the invention of the printing press in the 15th cent., it became possible to take a book and produce numerous copies that were exact replicas of one another. Mass duplication virtually eliminated the tedious work of scribes and prevented the inevitable errors and changes they introduced into the texts. When the first printed editions of the LXX were produced, however, the choice of a biblical text by the printers was sometimes based simply on which MSS were conveniently at hand rather than on deliberate selection, much less scholarly scrutiny. In a given codex the text of one biblical book may have been from Theodotion, for example, while another book in the same codex may have contained the Hexaplaric recension of the LXX. If a given codex was damaged, and therefore lacking all or part of a biblical book, the lacking text would be supplied from another codex near at hand, without thought to the pedigree of the texts contained therein. While the advent of modern printing technology stabilized the printed editions of the Bible, giving the appearance of homogeneity, the particular version it preserved and propagated [Vol. 5, p. 416] was in fact an arbitrary amalgam of texts with various pedigrees and characteristics.

The first printed edition of the entire Greek OT was produced by Christian scholars in Spain between 1514 and 1517, then published a few years later as part of the *Complutensian Polyglot Bible*. The OT was presented in three columns: the Latin Vulgate with pride of place in the middle, the Hebrew text on its right, and the Greek text (with a Latin interlinear translation) on its left. In addition, the Aramaic Targum, accompanied by a Latin translation, was placed at the bottom of the page. This work was initiated and directed by Cardinal Francisco Ximenes de Cisneros, who claimed to have carefully selected his MSS, including some supplied by Pope Leo X from the Vatican library.

At about the same time, the so-called *Aldine* edition of the Greek Bible, based on a few, relatively late MSS, was published in Venice. Of greater

importance is the *Sixtine* edition, published in 1587 under the auspices of Pope Sixtus V. This project was undertaken with care and thoroughness. After searching for MSS in various libraries, the editors, led by Cardinal Antonio Carafa, became convinced that what is now known as Codex Vaticanus or B (Vatican Library Gk. 1209) was the best MS upon which to base the new edition. Other MSS were used to fill the large gaps and correct errors in B, as well as to provide alternate readings from time to time. The Sixtine edition became the standard LXX text and was used by many subsequent editors.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, scholars began to collect and publish variant readings, that is, differences among the MSS for any given verse. This process gave birth to modern textual criticism and to the practice of publishing editions of ancient texts that include a critical apparatus (i.e., a section of notes indicating variant readings, usually found at the bottom of the page). The British scholars Robert Holmes and (after his death in 1805) James Parsons produced such an edition in five large volumes, which was published in Oxford between 1798 and 1827, under the title, *Vetus Testamentum Graecum cum variis lectionibus*. Using the Sixtine text as their base, this monumental work provides readings from about 300 MSS collated by a large number of British and Continental scholars. From our later vantage point, the methods used in this work can be easily criticized; and since the quality of the collations was not uniform, the edition must be used with care. Even today, however, specialists know that certain kinds of information can be found only in Holmes-Parsons.

Other editions were published during the 1800s, though none of them was truly satisfactory. Toward the end of that century, however, scholars in Cambridge, England, began to work on a diplomatic edition of Codex Vaticanus (i.e., an edition that reproduces as exactly as possible the text of the MS, although obvious scribal errors are corrected). This important document was collated against all the available uncials, many minuscules (thirty in Genesis, for example), the secondary versions, and quotations from Philo, Josephus, and the Christian fathers. A preliminary "portable" edition in three volumes, entitled *The Old Testament in Greek according to the Septuagint*, was produced by H. B. Swete in 1887–94 (3rd edition, 1901–07), and became the most widely used text during the first decades of the twentieth century. The more ambitious project, often referred to as the Larger Cambridge edition, was entrusted to A. E. Brooke and N. McLean, and

in 1906 it began to be published in fascicles. Although never completed, this work is a great treasure; for the books of Joshua through Chronicles, it remains our primary source of information.

Given that every MS contains scribal errors and that no one existing MS preserves in its entirety the Greek text as it originally came from the translator or reviser, a different approach can be taken, namely, the production of a *critical text*. Instead of printing the entire text of one MS, an editor or editorial committee examines the textual variants and decides which reading is most likely original. This approach produces a reconstructed text, often referred to as *eclectic*, because the resulting printed text is not identical to *any* MS in its entirety. Although the text that appears on the printed page of such an edition is not found in any one surviving MS, it preserves the best readings selected from among all of them and is therefore closer to the text of the original documents.

The production of a critical text for the LXX has been the goal of many scholars. Above all, however, it was the vision of a brilliant and controversial [Vol. 5, p. 417] scholar named Paul de Lagarde, whose work was taken up upon his death in 1891 by his student, Alfred Rahlfs. As a means to that end, a scholarly center known as the Septuaginta-Unternehmen was established in Göttingen in 1908. This organization soon became the world's primary center for LXX research. As its director, Rahlfs devoted his considerable talents and energies to searching for MSS, evaluating them, and designing a new system for their enumeration, as well as producing some of the most penetrating textual studies in the history of LXX scholarship.

Work on a full critical edition had to be postponed because of the First World War and its aftermath, but Rahlfs undertook the production of a provisional critical edition, which appeared just before his death in 1935. His text is based primarily on the three great uncials—Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, and Alexandrinus—but many other sources were used extensively. Rahlfs's edition, in spite of its provisional character, has since been regarded as the standard LXX text, even though for many books of the Bible it has now been superseded by individual volumes of the larger project, often referred to as "the Göttingen Septuagint."

For the fuller edition, Rahlfs himself published the volume on Psalms (and Odes) in 1931, though he emphasized the preliminary character of the work, since it was not based on fresh collations. Subsequently, Werner Kappler, Joseph Ziegler, Robert Hanhart, John W. Wevers, and Udo Quast

have produced over twenty full and authoritative volumes. Entitled *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum*, this project combines a judiciously reconstructed critical text with a virtually exhaustive repository of information from all available sources.

Translations of the LXX into modern languages are not common. An English version was produced in the 18th cent. by Charles Thomson and published in 1808 (rev. ed. by C. A. Muse, *The Septuagint Bible: The Oldest Version of the Old Testament in the Translation of Charles Thomson* [1954]). More widely used has been the translation by Lancelot C. L. Brenton (*The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament* [1844], reprinted frequently under the title *The Septuagint with Apocrypha*). Because these English versions are based on unreliable texts and are otherwise problematic, the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies has sponsored a modern work entitled *A New English Translation of the Septuagint* (2007). Special mention should be made of *La Bible d'Alexandrie*, a multivolume French translation of the Septuagint with a philological and exegetical commentary that pays special attention to the patristic use of the Greek OT. In 1990, John W. Wevers published a very helpful commentary, *Notes on the Greek Text of Exodus*, which was followed by individual volumes on the other books of the Pentateuch. Other commentary projects are in preparation.

(The classic source for information on Septuagint studies is H. B. Swete, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, 2d ed. [1914], which includes documentation for many of the details mentioned in this article. Much of Swete's material is updated in Sidney Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study* [1968], and in N. Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context: An Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible* [2000]. See also M. Harl et al., *La Bible Grecque des Septante: Du judaïsme hellénistique au christianisme ancien*, 2nd ed. [1994]; K. H. Jobes and M. Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint* [2000]; F. Siegert, *Zwischen Hebräischen Bibel und Alten Testament: Eine Einführung in die Septuaginta* [2001]; M. Hengel, *The Septuagint as Christian Scripture: Its Prehistory and the Problem of Its Canon* [2002]; R. T. McLay, *The Use of the Septuagint in New Testament Research* [2003]; J. Dines, *The Septuagint* [2004]; A. Wasserstein and D. Wasserstein, *The Legend of the Septuagint* [2006].)

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## 16. ISBE REVISED .... S. K. SODERLUND

SEPTUAGINT sep-tōō'ə-jint. The name commonly applied to the Greek version of the OT most widely used in antiquity. It is abbreviated LXX (see II below).

I. Importance
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### I. Importance.

*A. Pioneering Effort.* The LXX holds a unique place among the ancient translations of the OT. Begun in the 3rd cent. B.C., it was a bold pioneering work. Not only was it the first attempt to reproduce the Hebrew Scriptures in another tongue, but the size and nature of the undertaking were entirely unprecedented in the Hellenistic world (cf. S. P. Brock, "The Phenomenon of the Septuagint," in *Oudtestamentische Studiën*, 17 [1972], 11–36). Sociologically it bore witness to the breakdown of international barriers and to the dissemination of the Greek language as a result of the conquests of Alexander the Great. The Jewish settlers in the cosmopolitan city of Alexandria, forced by circumstances to abandon their language, nonetheless clung tenaciously to their faith. For them the translation of their sacred law into Greek was of utmost significance in safeguarding their religion as well as in satisfying their liturgical and educational needs. Conversely, for the gentile world this translation served as an introduction to Jewish history and religion.

*B. Influence on Subsequent Literature.* The LXX is also important as a source for later literatures, both Jewish and Christian. The impact of the special translation-Greek vocabulary created by the LXX can be seen in the writings of Philo and Josephus, the Pseudepigrapha, and other Jewish-Greek historical, exegetical, poetic, and apologetic works. Then came what was probably the most momentous event for the LXX: it was taken over from the Jews by the Christian Church. Thus the translation had an even wider circulation and influence than if it had remained exclusively within Jewish circles. The LXX was the Bible for most writers of the NT. Not only did they take from it most of their express citations of Scripture, but their writings — in particular the Gospels, and among them especially Luke — contain numerous reminiscences of its language. The theological terms of the NT, such as "law," "righteousness," "mercy," "truth," "propitiation," were taken over directly from the LXX and must be understood in the light of their use in that version (cf. C. H. Dodd, *Bible and the Greeks* [1935]; D. Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings* [1967]). Further, the LXX became the Bible of the early Church Fathers and thereby helped to mold dogma, e.g., it furnished proof texts to both parties in the Arian controversy (cf. the use of ***ektísen***, "created," in Prov. 8:22). Finally, the LXX was a potent tool in the missionary work of the early Church, and when translations of the OT Scriptures into other languages became necessary, in most cases they were made from the LXX and not from the Hebrew.

*C. Influence on the Christian OT Canons.* The LXX has also vitally influenced the titles, order, and number of books in the Christian OT canons (Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Greek Orthodox). Several of the familiar titles of OT books — especially those of the Pentateuch — derive from the LXX rather than from the Hebrew. Likewise, the standard order of books in the Christian OT is largely a Greek rather than a Hebrew inheritance. Although it must be emphasized that the LXX MSS and the patristic and synodical lists seldom arrange the books identically (see the lists in Swete, *Intro.*, pp. 201–214), in essence the Hebrew threefold division of Law, Prophets, and Writings was replaced with the Greek fourfold division of Law, History, Poetry, and Prophets, which is apparently based on literary character and chronological sequence. Modern printed editions of the LXX follow (with slight variations) the order of books found in Codex Vaticanus. The same pattern is basically adopted in the Bibles of Western Christendom, although with certain further modifications, e.g., the Minor Prophets follow rather than precede — as in the LXX — the Major Prophets.

A more crucial question concerns the number of books in the OT canon. Most of the Greek MSS and the patristic synodical lists of the OT contain more books than the Hebrew canon, as well as additional sections to some canonical books (e.g., Additions to the Book of Esther). This extra material constitutes the bulk of the so-called Apocrypha, declared by Jerome and the Reformers to be of lesser standing than the Hebrew canon. For a full discussion of the critical issues *see* APOCRYPHA; CANON OF THE OT. But regardless of the canonicity of the Apocrypha, all traditions within the Christian Church must be grateful to the LXX for preserving so much of the intertestamental literature, which forms part of the background of the NT.

*D. Contribution to OT Textual Criticism.* For many scholars, the significance of the LXX lies primarily in its contribution to the textual criticism of the OT (cf. H. M. Orlinsky, pp. 144, 149–155; *BA*, 9 [1946], 21–34). When a difficult reading occurs in the Hebrew text, one means of dealing with it is to turn to the ancient translations, among which the LXX takes pride of place, for possible clues to the meaning of the Hebrew word or passage. Thus an attempt is made to reproduce the Hebrew text that lay before the Greek translator and on that basis to compare the relative merits of the two texts. A classic [Vol. 4, p. 401] example of a text thought to be preserved in its

original form in the LXX (together with the Syriac and Vulg.) is Gen. 4:8. Here the MT simply reads, "Cain said to Abel"; the LXX, however, completes the dangling construction by adding Cain's words, "Let us go out to the field." Similarly, it is virtually certain that in 1 S. 14:41 the LXX preserves the authentic passage missing in the MT through scribal error.

But this process of retroversion has its own hazards and must be used with extreme caution. Three problem areas may be cited. There is first the question whether the extant Greek text accurately represents what the Greek translators wrote. In this field LXX scholarship has made significant strides; yet many unresolved inner-Greek textual problems remain. Second, there is the question of the type of translation — literal, idiomatic, paraphrastic, midrashic. Confidence in the restored Hebrew text depends upon how literally a given person translated, and this judgment can be made only on the basis of intimate acquaintance with the translator's overall style. Finally, there is the possibility that the translator may have misunderstood the passage or tried to smooth out a difficult reading; in these cases his translation has almost no value for the elucidation of the MT. When to these considerations is added the complication that the extant LXX consists of compositions differing greatly in quality, it may be appreciated that the restoration of the Hebrew text directly from the LXX is at best a risky business (cf. M. H. Goshen-Gottstein, *Textus*, 3 [1963], 130–158). This precaution is ignored in much of the discussion on the subject (note esp. the misuse of the LXX in the critical notes of *BH*).

It used to be said that the LXX is important as a text-critical tool because it represents a Hebrew text nearly a millennium older than the earliest extant Hebrew MSS, which are medieval. Since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls (2nd cent. B.C.-1st cent. A.D.) this is no longer true, at least for portions of the OT. But far from undermining interest in the LXX, the DSS have intensified it, especially since a number of their readings support the LXX against the MT. Thus many of the discrepancies between the Hebrew and Greek texts of certain books (e.g., Samuel and Jeremiah), previously blamed on the translators, actually go back to a Hebrew text (*Vorlage*) different from, and sometimes superior to, the MT.

These data have given rise to new theories about the early stages and development of the Hebrew text, e.g., the theory of "local texts" originally propounded by W. E Albright (*BASOR*, 140 [1955], 27–33; repr. in F. M. Cross and S. Talmon, eds., *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text*, pp. 140–46)

and elaborated by F. M. Cross (*HTR*, 57 [1964], 281–299; repr. in Cross and Talmon, pp. 177–195). According to this theory distinct varieties of texts developed in three centers of Jewish learning during the intertestamental period — Palestine, Babylon, and Egypt; the LXX is a witness to the Egyptian text-type. An application of these theories to LXX use in OT textual criticism is found in R. Klein, *Textual Criticism of the OT: From the Septuagint to Qumran* (1974). But since the MS evidence is still incomplete, a final verdict regarding these controversial theories is not yet possible (cf. G. Howard, *VT*, 21 [1971], 440–450; D. W. Gooding, *Tyndale Bulletin*, 26 [1975], 113–132).

*E. Its Own Literary Significance.* Although important for NT exegesis and OT textual criticism, the LXX must not be limited to these servant roles. It ought also to be appreciated as a vital religious document in its own right. For many generations the LXX was the "authorized" version of Greek-speaking Jews and Christians who had no recourse to the Hebrew; thus it significantly influenced the religious and intellectual history of the cultures that it touched, either directly or indirectly, through its daughter versions.

A recognition of this influence carries with it a mandate for certain tasks in LXX scholarship. First, scholars must ascertain the meaning that the LXX had for its original readers by applying to it the same canons of criticism that obtain in the NT. This involves doing exegetical studies on the language and syntax of the LXX, writing commentaries on its individual books, and providing worthy translations into modern languages. Some studies along these lines have already been undertaken (e.g., R. R. Ottley, *Book of Isaiah According to the Septuagint* [2 vols., 1904–1906]; L. H. Brockington, *VT*, 1 [1951], 23–32; C. T. Fritsch, "The Concept of God in the Greek Translation of Isaiah," in J. M. Myers, *et al.*, eds., *Biblical Studies in Memory of H. C. Alleman* [1960], pp. 155–169). But more studies are required for the LXX to assume its due place in the history of interpretation.

Even so, the program outlined above is not sufficient, since LXX study cannot involve merely descriptive analysis of the Greek Bible. Scholars must ask the deeper questions concerning the LXX's "self-understanding" and must determine whether the concept of inspiration can be applied to this corpus in any way. As is well known, the church fathers — apart from Jerome — considered the LXX as inspired as the Hebrew (cf. Irenaeus *Adv. haer.* iii.21.3f.; Augustine *Ep.* 71.3–6, to Jerome). Significantly, the idea of LXX inspiration — albeit in a slightly modified form — has been revived in

modern times; cf. P. Benoit (*Jesus and the Gospel*, I [Eng. tr. 1973], 1–10), whose views are supported by P. Auvray (*RB*, 59 [1952], 321–336) and P. Grelot (*Sciences ecclésiastiques*, 16 [1964], 387–418). Along different lines, H. M. Orlinsky, in the Grinfield Lectures on the LXX at the University of Oxford for 1973–74, spoke of the LXX translators' high view of Scripture and philosophy of translation, as well as the notion of the LXX's divine origin that lies behind the traditional account in the Letter of Aristeas (*HUCA*, 46 [1975], 89–114). Orlinsky's point was to enhance the reputation of the LXX as a reliable witness to an early form of the Hebrew Scriptures.

By contrast, in the Grinfield Lectures of 1968–69, D. W. Gooding presented evidence that the LXX contains material reflecting a rather different attitude toward Scripture from that proposed by Orlinsky (*Relics of Ancient Exegesis* [1976]). In his study of the Miscellanies of 3 Reigns (1 Kings) 2, Gooding showed that this material contains considerable midrashic interpretation, some of it extremely fanciful. This does not mean that the translators could not clearly distinguish Scripture from midrash, but that they saw their task as interpreting Scripture, with the necessary liberties taken. The only near-contemporary models of Bible translation — the Aramaic Targums — provide some external evidence for the prevalence of this attitude. Thus the LXX must be handled with great caution as a guide to the meaning of OT revelation, even though, as pointed out above, it forms a valuable stage in the history of biblical interpretation. Perhaps the NT in its selective use of the LXX — sometimes quoting, sometimes departing from it — is an exemplary forerunner to critical use of the LXX.

## II. Origins.

*A. Traditional Accounts.* The most famous account of the translation of the Jewish law into Greek is the so-called Letter of Aristeas (Greek texts: P. Wendland, *Aristeae ad Philocratem Epistula* [1900]; H. St. J. Thackeray, appendix to Swete, *Intro.*, pp. 501–574; A. Pelletier, *Lettre d'Aristée à Philocrate* [1962]; Eng. trs.: Thackeray, *Letter of Aristeas* [1917]; H. T. Andrews, "The Letter of Aristeas," in *APOT*, II, 83–122; H. G. Meecham, *Oldest* [Vol. 4, p. 402] *Version of the Bible* [1932]; M. Hadas, *Aristeas to Philocrates* [1951]; R. J. H. Shutt, in J. H. Charlesworth, ed., *OT Pseudepigrapha*, II [1985], 7–34). This intriguing document purports to be a letter written by an official in the court of King Ptolemy II Philadelphus of Egypt (285–246 B.C.) and sent to his

brother Philocrates. The document describes how the royal librarian at Alexandria, allegedly Demetrius of Phalerum, convinced the king of the importance of securing for his library a copy of the Jewish law. Since, however, the law existed only in the Hebrew language, it first had to be translated. Therefore Demetrius urged the king to send a delegation to the high priest Eleazar in Jerusalem to request the dispatch of seventy-two elders, six from each tribe, who would execute the translation. Aristeas, who formed part of the embassy to Jerusalem, took the opportunity to discuss and praise at great length various aspects of the Jewish customs, land, and religion. Having agreed to the king's proposal, Eleazar selected seventy-two translators, who brought to Alexandria a copy of the law written in letters of gold. After being honorably received and hosted by the king, the learned elders were conducted across the breakwater known as the Heptastadion to the island of Pharos; there, after collaboration and comparison of results, they completed their task, as if by a miracle, in seventy-two days. The version was submitted for approval to the Jewish community and then to the king, a curse being pronounced on any who add to, subtract from, or alter the translation.

One may compare this account with two pre-Christian allusions to the same event, in the writings of the Jewish philosopher Aristobulus (2nd cent. B.C.) and Philo (early 1st cent. A.D.). According to a passage preserved by Eusebius (*Praep. ev.* xiii.12) and Clement of Alexandria (*Misc.* i.22), Aristobulus declared before one of the Egyptian monarchs that portions of the Hebrew Scriptures had existed in Greek centuries earlier, but the entire law was translated into Greek under Ptolemy Philadelphus at the instruction of Demetrius of Phalerum (the authenticity of the passage has, however, been disputed). Philo (*De vita Mosis* ii.5ff.) recorded the story of Eleazar's dispatch of the translators at Philadelphus's request, adding that in his day the completion of the translation was annually celebrated on the isle of Pharos. Philo's account anticipates the later embellishments of the story by hinting at the inspiration of the translators: "They prophesied like men possessed," he wrote, "not one in one way and one in another, but all producing the same words and phrases as though some unseen prompter were at the ears of each." It is not clear whether Aristobulus and Philo show dependence on the Aristeas account or attest to independent traditions. The later Jewish historian Josephus almost certainly knew the Aristeas story, since he paraphrased large portions of it in *Ant.* xii.2.1–15 (11–118).

The Christian fathers, like Josephus, accepted the Aristeas story at face value. In time the narrative was amplified, so that later accounts assert that the translators worked independently in separate cells (or in pairs), all producing identical versions. Although the Aristeas account mentions only the Pentateuch, according to later versions the entire OT was translated.

Even though the ancients accepted Aristeas's letter as sober history, scholars have long known that the story cannot be taken as a contemporary account of the events described. As early as the 16th cent. the authenticity of the "letter" was doubted, the *coup de grâce* being delivered in 1684 by the Oxford scholar Humphrey Hody in his detailed analysis *Contra Historiam LXX interpretum Aristeae*. Hody showed that the story contains errors of history as well as internal contradictions and must be considerably later than the purported 3rd cent. B.C. Present consensus places the date of composition in the late 2nd cent. B.C.

Nothing about the document's author is known except that, far from being a pagan in the service of Ptolemy's court, he was an ardent Jew writing on behalf of his own people. The narrative is thus seen as a piece of propaganda that glorifies the Jewish race and religion before a gentile audience (the view of most interpreters) or as an apology for Diaspora Judaism in the face of Palestinian criticisms (so V. Tcherikover, *HTR*, 51 [1958], 59–85; G. Howard, *JTS*, 22 [1971], 337–348).

With regard to the translation motif, a vigorous debate is still being carried on over the story's real purpose. P. Kahle (see below) assumed that the work was propaganda for a revision of the LXX, a view effectively refuted by G. Zuntz (*JSS*, 4 [1959], 109–126). A. F. J. Klijn (*NTS*, 11 [1964–65], 154–58) and S. Jellicoe (*NTS*, 12 [1965–66], 144–150) regarded it as an apology for the original LXX against an incipient revision, while D. W. Gooding saw it as a defense of the current LXX for those disturbed by the circulation of inaccurate Hebrew copies (*VT*, 13 [1963], 357–379). Although it may be difficult to disentangle fact from fiction in Aristeas and equally difficult to determine his real intent, most would agree that the story at least constitutes one bit of evidence for the translation of the Pentateuch in Alexandria in the 3rd cent. B.C.

An abiding witness to the influence of Aristeas's wonderful story is the very name Septuagint (full Latin title: *Interpretatio secundum Septuaginta seniores* [or *viros*], i.e., "The Interpretation according to the Seventy Elders" [or "Men"]). The reference to "septuaginta" (seventy) rather than

"septuaginta-et-duo" (seventy-two) may simply be an accommodation to brevity, or it may point to the influence of the tradition concerning the seventy elders in Ex. 24:1, 9. Attempts to displace the name Septuagint with a more accurate title such as Alexandrian Version or Old Greek are unlikely to succeed, at least on the popular level; however, the phrase "Old Greek" (= the oldest recoverable text form of a certain book) does have a certain usefulness in scholarly discussion.

*B. Modern Theories*. The absence of reliable firsthand information on the origins of the LXX makes the reconstruction of its early history speculative. In *ISBE* (1915), IV, *s.v.*, the eminent septuagintalist H. St. J. Thackeray propounded an explanation (later elaborated in *Septuagint* [Vol. 4, p. 403] *and Jewish Worship. A Study in Origins* [1921]) of the LXX's growth into its extant form. Accepting a historical core in the Letter of Aristeas, Thackeray acknowledged the bulk of the Pentateuch as having been translated at Alexandria in the 3rd cent. B.C. by a small official company. The next century, in Thackeray's scheme, saw the translation of the Latter Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Minor Prophets), which was originally stimulated by the synagogue practice of reading a second lesson (***haphtorah***) from the Prophets to illustrate the reading from the Law. Such lectionary extracts would soon have been superseded by a complete version of the Prophets under the sponsorship of a company of translators analogous to the pioneering body responsible for the Greek Pentateuch. Following the Latter Prophets came a partial or "expurgated" version of the Former Prophets, later supplemented by an anonymous Asian Jew whose style has affinities with that of Theodotion (see III.B.2 below). The translation of the Writings came last and under very different circumstances, probably as the outcome of individual enterprises. Consequently these books were handled much more freely, the translation often amounting to mere paraphrase. The primary exception was the book of Psalms, which was treated with more fidelity. For external evidence that most of the OT existed in Greek by the late 2nd cent. B.C., Thackeray pointed to the Prologue to Sirach (*ca.* 132–100 B.C.), which mentions the prior translation of "the Law itself, the prophecies, and the rest of the books."

A fragment of Rylands Greek Papyrus 458 showing Dt. 25:1–3. This is one of the earliest surviving texts of the Greek Bible (2nd cent B.C.) (John Rylands University Library, Manchester)

Although Thackeray's view may be criticized at various points, the strength of his approach is that by taking account of internal and external factors he sought to give an overview of the formation of the LXX. Such comprehensive reconstructions have otherwise been singularly lacking in the 20th cent., the debate over origins having taken quite a different turn. In 1915, the year that Thackeray's article first appeared in *ISBE*, P. Kahle published a controversial article, "Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Pentateuchtextes" (*Opera Minora* [1956], pp. 3–37), in which he denied that the LXX derives from an official translation of any sort. He argued instead that it arose in a manner analogous to the Aramaic Targums; i.e., several competing translations for each book existed side by side until they were superseded by an official revision (Kahle's thesis was restated and greatly elaborated in *Cairo Geniza* [1947; rev. ed. 1959]).

Although Kahle's argument runs counter to Thackeray's theory of origins, his object of attack was not Thackeray but P. de Lagarde, the polymathic scholar from Göttingen who is called the founder of modern LXX studies. Implicit in de Lagarde's work is the assumption that behind the mass of scribal recensional variants in the present MSS lies an original Greek Ur-text which can be approximately recovered by use of predetermined text-critical principles. This view was bequeathed to the Septuaginta- [Vol. 4, p. 404] Unternehmen—a research center established in Göttingen to pursue LXX studies and publish critical texts — and has also been espoused by various scholars around the world.

Kahle's challenge to the "Lagardian hypothesis" (as it has become known) made inevitable keen debate of the issue in the ensuing decades; in fact, this issue has become the watershed in modern LXX scholarship. Kahle's views have been accepted by many able scholars, his most enthusiastic follower undoubtedly being A. Sperber (see his articles in *JBL*, 54 [1935], 73–92; 59 [1940], 193–293; in the latter he moved considerably beyond Kahle). On the whole, however, the "Targum" theory originating with Kahle has failed to displace the Lagardian "Proto-LXX" theory as the dominant view in current LXX scholarship. Principal protagonists for the latter have been H. M. Orlinsky in North America (cf. *JAOS*, 61 [1941], 81–91), and in Europe P. Walters (formerly Katz) (cf. "Recovery of the Original LXX," in *Actes du premier Congrès de la Fédération internationale des Associations d'études classiques*

[1951], pp. 165–182). These scholars are convinced that the variants in extant MSS are due to scribal and recensional causes, not to multiple translations.

The discovery in the Judean desert of a Greek leather scroll of the Minor Prophets from the 1st cent. B.C. or A.D. has significant implications for the question of LXX origins. Although Kahle used this MS to defend his thesis ("A Leather Scroll of the Greek Minor Prophets and the Problem of the Septuagint," in *Opera Minora*, pp. 112–127), it is more commonly held to prove the existence of an original translation that was later revised according to the current Hebrew text (cf. D. Barthélemy, *RB*, 60 [1953], 18–29; repr. in Cross and Talmon, pp. 127–139; F. M. Cross, *HTR*, 57 [1964], 283f. repr. in Cross and Talmon, pp. 179f.).

The controversy over origins is not merely a theoretical matter but has practical consequences for LXX studies and the editing of texts. In Kahle's view, "The task which the LXX presents to scholars is not the 'reconstruction' of an imaginary 'Urtext' nor the discovery of it, but a careful collection and investigation of all the remains and translations of earlier versions of the Greek Bible which differed from the Christian standard text" (*Cairo Geniza* [2nd ed. 1959], p. 264). Sperber proposed a reconstruction of the Greek Bible of the Church Fathers, which he thought possible by retroversion of the Old Latin version into Greek ("How to Edit the LXX," in S. Lieberman, *et al.*, eds.; *Harry Austryn Wolfson Jubilee Volume*, II [1965], 752f.). By contrast, the program of the Göttingen Septuaginta-Unternehmen is to publish a set of critical texts that as nearly as possible represents the earliest recoverable text-form of the Greek Bible. In the present state of knowledge the Göttingen approach is assuredly the correct one and appears beyond reasonable challenge.

Part of the Greek scroll of the Minor Prophets from **Naḥal Ḥeber** in the Judean desert (mid-1st cent A.D.). It shows Hab. 1:14–2:5 and 2:13–15 (courtesy, Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums)

### III. Transmission.

*A. MSS.* The LXX, no less than any other document of antiquity, has a complicated history of textual transmission, including scribal corruption and deliberate revision. The MS witnesses to the text of the LXX are usually classified as uncials, cursives (or minuscules), and papyri. For a good

summary of the most important, see Jellicoe, *Septuagint and Modern Study*, pp. 175–242; see also F. G. Kenyon, *Text of the Greek Bible*, pp. 32–53. A comprehensive list of the documents known in 1914 is A. Rahlfs, *Verzeichnis der griechischen Handschriften des AT*, *Mitteilungen des Septuaginta-Unternehmens*, 2. For an excellent catalog of biblical papyri see K. Aland, ed., *Repertorium der griechischen christlichen Papyri*, I. *Biblische Papyri* (*Patristische Texte und Studien*, 18 [1976]). The chief codices of the Greek OT are also the most important of the Greek NT: Vaticanus (**B**) and Sinaiticus (**א**), both 4th cent. A.D., and Alexandrinus (**A**), 5th century. Of these three, **B** has been confirmed as containing the best text, with certain notable exceptions, e.g., Judges and Isaiah. In the 20th cent., however, numerous papyri have been discovered; some are from the 1st and 2nd cents. B.C. and thus antedate the chief uncials and the Christian "takeover" of the LXX. (*See* Vol. I, plate 14; picture in PAPYRUS.) The later cursives (9th–16th cents.) have been reinstated to a place of importance, especially if they go back to early codices now lost.

Since there are hundreds of MSS attesting different portions of the LXX (by far the majority are of the Psalms), inevitably the quality of text and scribal accuracy vary greatly from one source to another. An unedifying catalog of the scribal errors to which all such documents are heir — haplography, dittography, homoiarcton, homoeoteleuton, etc. — may easily be compiled (*see* TEXT AND MSS OF THE OT). Most of these traditional errors are readily recognized and corrected; the revisional elements that have intruded into transmission history of the LXX are harder to detect, however.

*B. Revisions.* The sources of revised readings vary. Sometimes an individual scribe may have tried to make sense of a passage that he was copying. Sometimes a "better" reading was borrowed from another Greek version. Sometimes the text was systematically reworded according to certain predetermined principles; the resultant text is commonly known as a recension. The existence of different Greek versions and LXX recensions in the early Christian era is attested by the two leading biblical scholars of their time, Origen (3rd cent.) and Jerome (4th cent.).

Confronting the divergences between the LXX and the Hebrew text of his day as well as the conflicting readings in his LXX MSS, Origen devised a scheme whereby he thought he could "repair the disagreements in the

copies of the LXX" (*Comm. in Matt.* xv.14). His ambitious project entailed the compilation of a six-column edition of the Greek OT known as the Hexapla, comprising 1) the current Hebrew text, 2) the same in Greek letters, 3) the version of Aquila, 4) the version of Symmachus, 5) his own revised LXX text, and 6) the version of Theodotion. Although Origen's undertaking later caused considerable confusion and mixture of text-types, it is primarily thanks to him that scholars possess any knowledge of the versions of Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus (this being their chronological order according to long-standing tradition), which are commonly called The Three or the Minor Greek Versions.

*1. Version of Aquila.* When the Christian Church adopted the LXX as its Bible and began to cite proof texts from it in controversies with the Jews (e.g., ***parthénos*** in Isa. 7:14), the latter were considerably embarrassed and retorted that the LXX was an inaccurate translation. Having declared the LXX faulty, they needed another Greek version that would more accurately reflect their Hebrew text. This desideratum was provided in the most literal form imaginable by the version of Aquila, a proselyte from Pontus (d. *ca.* A.D. 150). Influenced by Rabbi Akiba and his school of strict exegesis, where every particle and minute detail of the Hebrew text was sacred, Aquila attempted to reproduce the Hebrew text word for word in Greek, without regard to Greek grammar or syntax. An illustration of Aquila's style is Gen. 1:1, which might be rendered into English, "In heading founded God with the heaven and with the earth." "Heading" was selected because the Hebrew word for "beginning" was a derivative of "head," while "with" represents the untranslatable sign of the Hebrew accusative (***ʾet***), which is indistinguishable from the preposition "with." Readings from Aquila's versions are identified in the margins of certain LXX MSS by the α΄. A useful aid to the study of this version is J. Reider and N. Turner, *Index to Aquila* (*SVT*, 12; 1966).

Aquila's version, although stylistically a barbarous Greek translation and largely unintelligible apart from the Hebrew (it has been called "a colossal crib"), nevertheless enjoyed great popularity and longevity among the Jews of the Dispersion; as late as the 6th cent. an edict of the emperor Justinian provided for its use in the synagogues. Although the version is commonly regarded as a new translation from the Hebrew rather than as a revision of the LXX, new evidence suggests that it was not an entirely fresh and independent undertaking, but actually the end product of a process

started long before Aquila. In his epoch-making book *Les Devanciers d'Aquila* (*SVT*, 10; 1963), pp. 246–252, D. Barthélemy argued that the Greek leather scroll of the Minor Prophets found at Murabba'at bears witness to an antecedent revision (labeled *Kaige* by Barthélemy because it translates Heb. ***gam***, "also," by Gk. ***kaíge***) of the LXX toward the Hebrew text, that Aquila both knew and used.

*2. Version of Theodotion.* Another person who, in the 2nd cent., worked on the text of the Greek OT was Theodotion, possibly an Ephesian convert to Judaism who lived in the reign of Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 161–180). His readings are identified in marginal notations of LXX MSS by the symbol **Θ΄**. The outstanding characteristics of his version are avoidance of the Greek monstrosities of Aquila, frequent agreement with or slight improvement on the LXX, and a bias for the transliteration of Hebrew words into Greek letters. Early in the Christian era the version of Daniel that goes by Theodotion's name displaced the LXX version, which was an extremely free rendering of the canonical Daniel. Similarly, in certain MSS his version was used to fill out lacunae in the LXX of Job and Jeremiah.

It seems certain, however, that this second-century Theodotion was preceded in his work of revision by a person of the 1st cent. B.C. or 1st cent. A.D., styled "Ur-Theodotion" by modern scholarship. The reason for this postulate is the appearance of "Theodotionic" readings in writings antedating the time of the activity of the second-century Theodotion. Some of these readings are found in the NT (cf. the quotation in 1 Cor. 15:54 of Isa. 25:8, which corresponds exactly to that of Theodotion). In *Theodotionic Revision of the Book of Exodus* (1972), K. O'Connell listed new evidence for the existence of this Ur-Theodotion. [Vol. 4, p. 405] In fact, O'Connell said, this early revision of Exodus is to be identified with the *Kaige* recension discovered by Barthélemy. Barthélemy thought that the readings assigned to Theodotion in the Minor Prophets derive from neither the traditional Theodotion nor an Ur-Theodotion but from some other translator altogether. In an era when many long-held positions are being challenged, scholars have even doubted that the "Theodotionic" Daniel hails from Theodotion, thinking that it more likely is also a translation by Ur-Theodotion.

*3. Versions of Symmachus and Others.* A third version produced in the late 2nd cent. or early 3rd cent. A.D. was that of Symmachus, possibly a

Jewish-Christian of the heterodox sect known as the Ebionites. This revision, identified in the MSS by the σ′, apparently was a recasting of Aquila's text into idiomatic Greek with a free use of other sources, including the LXX and Theodotion (for a different assessment of Symmachus's sources see Barthélemy, *Devanciers*, pp. 261–65).

In addition to the versions named above, Origen also collated for some parts of the OT three anonymous versions which are known as the Quinta, Sexta, and Septima (i.e., the 5th, 6th, and 7th Greek translations — the LXX, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion being the first four). Origen had discovered one of these versions at Nicopolis in Greece and another in a jar near Jericho. Renderings from the Quinta are extant for 2 Kings, Job, Psalms, Canticles, and the Minor Prophets. Barthélemy thought that it might actually have contained readings in the Minor Prophets from the version of Theodotion (*Devanciers*, p. 260). The Quinta was described by F. Field as stylistically the most elegant of the Greek versions. The Sexta is attested for Psalms and Canticles. Probably nothing from the Septima has survived, and some scholars have doubted its very existence. The most comprehensive collection of the Hexapla is still F. Field, *Origenis Hexapla … fragmenta* (1875), although it greatly needs updating.

*4. Recension of Origen.* Besides the non-LXX versions collated by Origen in the Hexapla, Jerome mentioned three LXX recensions circulating in the 4th cent. in different parts of the Christian world. In *Preface to Chronicles* he wrote: "Alexandria and Egypt in their Septuagint acclaim Hesychius as their authority, the region from Constantinople to Antioch approves the copies of Lucian the martyr, the intermediate Palestinian provinces read the MSS which were promulgated by Eusebius and Pamphilius on the basis of Origen's labors, and the whole world is divided among these three varieties of texts." The three recensions are frequently called, after Jerome's Latin phrase, the *Trifaria Varietas*.

The fifth column of the Hexapla, as already mentioned, contains Origen's revised LXX text. Since he assumed that the Hebrew text of his day was the same one used by the LXX translators, Origen sought to amend the corrupted copies of the LXX text by making them conform to the current Hebrew text. In a famous passage in his *Comm. in Matt.* (xv.14) Origen explained his modus operandi: "When I was uncertain of the LXX reading because the various copies did not tally, I settled the issue by consulting the

other versions and retaining what was in agreement with them. Some passages did not appear in the Hebrew; these I marked with an obelus as I did not dare to leave them out altogether. Other passages I marked with an asterisk to show that they were not in the Septuagint but that I had added them from the other versions in agreement with the Hebrew text." (In LXX MSS containing these signs the asterisk is usually given in the form ※, while the obelus appears most commonly as ÷; another symbol used by Origen to indicate the close of a specified reading is the metobelus, marked: or ). By this editorial process Origen hoped to safeguard the readings of the current LXX as well as to correct them wherever they were faulty, although it is certain that he also introduced some unmarked changes, e.g., inversions and substitution of synonyms.

Although Origen's text-critical work was well intentioned, it nonetheless allowed many readings properly belonging to other versions to become embedded in the LXX as it was transmitted. The gigantic Hexapla was itself never copied, but the revised LXX text of its fifth column was transcribed by Eusebius and Pamphilius and circulated in Palestine, where it enjoyed great popularity. In the first copies of this Origenic (or hexaplaric) text, the critical signs were probably included; after much copying, however, the signs, divorced from their context, became unintelligible and were frequently omitted. Only a few MSS today preserve the Hexaplaric recension with the signs partially preserved. The best MS of this type is the Syriac translation of the fifth-column text by Paul of Tella, *ca.* A.D. 616, called the Syrohexapla, represented by Codex Ambrosianus. The manner in which most of the hexaplaric MSS were copied has brought much confusion to LXX scholarship, for Origen thus became, through the fault of others, indirectly responsible for the production of MSS in which the current LXX text and later versions are hopelessly mixed. Thus the first task of LXX textual criticism is as far as possible to identify and eliminate all of these "hexaplaric" elements and to restore a pre-Origenic text.

*5. Recension of Lucian.* The "Lucian the martyr" mentioned by Jerome was probably Lucian of Antioch (also called Lucian of Samosata from his birthplace), an elder and leading exponent of the Antiochian exegetical school, martyred under Maximin in A.D. 311. He has also been associated with the Syrian revision of the NT in the 4th century. The MSS probably deriving from this recension were first identified in the latter half of the 19th

cent. by three scholars working independently — A. M. Ceriani, F. Field, and P. de Lagarde — who observed the agreement of readings in certain MSS with the Antiochian fathers Chrysostom and Theodoret. The special features of Lucian's recension are lucidity, fulness, and atticizing spelling. It often revises the LXX in favor of better Greek and includes readings from various sources, with the frequent result of "double readings." The sources of these revised readings are, however, of unequal worth. In the Prophets the text seems to be no more than an expansion of the hexaplaric text with further readings inserted from Aquila, Theodotion, and especially Symmachus. In Samuel, however, the Lucianic text appears to preserve elements of great antiquity, and by a careful analysis of its unique readings there J. Wellhausen and S. R. Driver were able to make significant emendations of the Hebrew text of that book. Barthélemy's suggestion that the Lucianic text of certain parts of Samuel-Kings actually preserves the original LXX of these portions has yet to be argued convincingly. As with other revisions, the existence of "Lucianic" readings antedating the historical Lucian has occasioned the hypothesis of an Ur- or Proto-Lucian (cf. E. Tov, *RB,* 79 [1972], 101–113; repr. in Cross and Talmon, pp. 293–305). For some books, e.g., Genesis, there appears to be no identifiable Lucianic text at all.

*6. Recensions of Hesychius and Others.* According to a widespread opinion the Hesychius mentioned by Jerome is the Egyptian bishop of that name who, Eusebius said (*HE* viii.13), was martyred in Alexandria, presumably during the Diocletian persecution in the first decade of the 4th century. But this identification rests mostly on speculation, [Vol. 4, p. 406] and much controversy surrounds the subject. Also debated is the extent to which existing MSS preserve the Hesychian recension. As early as 1705 E. Grabe theorized that the Hesychian recension is primarily extant in Codex Vaticanus, an identification subsequently favored by various scholars. Others, however, beginning with Ceriani in 1890, have taken Codex Marchalianus (Q) as the Hesychian primary representative. Yet others, e.g., J. Ziegler, have doubted whether any tenable identification of this recension can be made.

A page from Codex Marchalianus (Jer. 24:11–19 [MT 35:11–19]). Note the peculiar features: the margins have hexaplaric readings and signs; corrections in the text (lines 14, 19, 24); w. 16–18 have been omitted due to homoioteleuton (added at the bottom of the page); and words that occur frequently are abbreviated (The Vatican Library)

In addition to the recensions mentioned by Jerome, other revisions, both prehexaplaric and posthexaplaric, existed in the early centuries, as shown by LXX text-critical work. M. L. Margolis in his thorough work on the text of Joshua discovered evidence of another recension popular in Constantinople and Asia Minor; he called it **C**. Similarly, A. Rahlfs isolated two recensions, which he labeled *R* and **C**, in Ruth, Judges, and Kingdoms (Samuel-Kings).

All these discoveries have enriched understanding of the early transmission history of the LXX, but they have also increased awareness of that history's complexity. One result has been questioning of the legitimacy of the traditional distinction between the Minor Greek Versions (Aquila, Theodotion, Symmachus) and the LXX recensions (Origen, Lucian, Hesychius), some scholars having been inclined to see all these texts as part of an ongoing revision of the basic LXX (Old Greek).

*C. Daughter Versions and Citations.* For several centuries the LXX served as the point of departure for the translation of the OT into other languages. Jerome's decision to base his Latin translation of the OT on the original Hebrew was fundamentally new in the history of Christian Bible translation. Because many of the translations inspired by the LXX go back to very early times, they constitute an important link in the transmission history of the LXX. Daughter versions of the LXX (i.e., translations of the OT based on the LXX) are found in the following languages: Latin, Coptic (in two dialects: Bohairic, the dialect of Lower Egypt, and Sahidic, the dialect of Thebes), Ethiopic, Gothic, Armenian, Arabic, Syriac, Georgian, and Slavonic. Of these, the most important translations, on account of their antiquity, are the Old Latin and the Bohairic. The Syriac translation of Paul of Tella (called the Syrohexapla), as mentioned above, is extremely important for the Origenic recension. Modern text-critical study of the LXX tries to take full account of the evidence of the versions and collates their readings in conjunction with those of the Greek MSS. *See also* VERSIONS.

Citations and allusions in early Jewish and Christian writings constitute another valuable set of witnesses to the text of the LXX. Chief among the Jewish-Greek writings are those of Philo and Josephus. Christian sources are the NT, the Greek and Latin church fathers, and church lectionaries. The patristic evidence available is indeed vast, but a true evaluation of it is often

difficult, sometimes due to an uncertain text or to the tenuous distinction between citation and allusion. Nevertheless, important results have been obtained through careful analysis of these Jewish and Christian sources. They were invaluable in the isolation of the Lucianic and *Kaige* recensions, and they have a vital bearing on the problem of the Proto-LXX (a subject brilliantly explored by P. Katz, *Philo's Bible* [1950]).

*D. Printed Editions.* The earliest printings of the LXX (apart from portions of the Psalms) were those of the Complutensian Polyglot of Cardinal Ximenes (1514–1517), the Aldine edition of Venice (1518), and the Sixtine edition of Rome (1586), published under the auspices of Pope Sixtus V. The Sixtine, said to be based on Codex Vaticanus (**B**) but seemingly based on the Aldine edition corrected by **B**, was frequently reprinted and sometimes further revised; it became for many generations of LXX readers a *textus receptus*. In England a major publishing enterprise in 1707–1720 was the Oxford edition of the LXX begun by E. Grabe. Based on Codex Alexandrinus (A), it had the peculiar feature of using critical signs and print in different sizes to indicate divergences between the Hebrew and Greek. A greater achievement was the Oxford text by R. Holmes and J. Parsons (1798–1827). Although based on a revised Sixtine text, it was the first edition to embody a major critical apparatus in which nearly three hundred MSS were collated, a mammoth work still of use to LXX scholars. In 1850–1887 there appeared in Leipzig the seven editions of F. C. Tischendorf (the last two issued by E. Nestle). The basic text used was yet another revised Sixtine edition, accompanied by a small apparatus with collations from A and the newly discovered Codex Sinaiticus (**א**); however, the quality of the work did not equal Tischendorf's achievements on the NT text.

In the 20th cent. the centers of text-critical work on the LXX shifted to Cambridge and Göttingen. The first Cambridge text was the three volume "portable" edition of H. B. Swete, *The OT in Greek* (1887–1912), intended to be an accurate representation of **B** together with collations of the chief uncials. Swete's text was envisaged as a forerunner to the larger Cambridge edition under the same [Vol. 4, p. 407] title, whose execution was entrusted to A. E. Brooke and N. McLean (later joined by Thackeray). This edition was essentially a reprint of Swete's text but had a much fuller critical apparatus, including collations of all the uncials known at the time of publication, a careful representative selection of the minuscules, the principal daughter

versions, and citations from Philo, Josephus, and the early church fathers. This eminent publishing venture lasted from 1906 to 1940, during which time about half the LXX appeared.

The Septuaginta-Unternehmen project in Göttingen was meanwhile proceeding along different lines. Whereas the Cambridge approach was to print one MS as the basic text, the reigning philosophy in Göttingen was to attempt a critically restored LXX text through a comparison of all the sources. Just as Swete's text preceded the larger Cambridge edition, so a two-volume manual edition by A. Rahlfs, *Septuaginta* (1935), initially demonstrated the Göttingen approach. The text is an eclectic one, determined on the basis of the three major uncials, B, א, and A. Rahlfs was also the first to prepare a text-*Psalmi cum Odis* (1931) — in the larger Göttingen series. In P. de Lagarde's original plan for this series texts representing the three recensions mentioned by Jerome would first be prepared, and from a comparison of them an archetype text would be determined. To this end Lagarde himself published what he thought was the Lucianic text of the historical books (*Librorum Veteris Testamenti Canonicorum Pars Prior* [1883]). But his plan was abandoned by Rahlfs and his collaborators when they discovered that the MS evidence did not fit such a rigid pattern. It is now clear that each book or translation unit has its own peculiarities, with the number of textual families and recensions varying. In the current Göttingen program these groupings and recensions, together with the daughter versions and patristic citations, are clearly laid out in a full critical apparatus, a second apparatus being reserved for the hexaplaric versions. The body of the text represents the editors' decisions on the most probable reading of the Old Greek archetype. The most productive editor in this series has been J. Ziegler of Würzburg, the acknowledged dean of mid-twentieth-century LXX text-critical scholarship. An important addition to the series is the accompanying set of monographs published as *Mitteilungen des Septuaginta-Unternehmens*, which gives further extensive textual information on each book. There can be little doubt that the Göttingen project represents the outstanding and most thorough text-critical enterprise in LXX studies at this time.

### IV. Characteristics.—

This section surveys some of the salient translation features of the LXX. Since the LXX is not a unity, its portions do not have the same characteristics. Therefore the survey must proceed section by section, book by book.

Attention will focus on the quality of Greek in each part and on the relationship of the Greek to the Hebrew. In general the LXX vocabulary and accidence are those of Hellenistic or Koine Greek, but the syntax of most books is better described as "translation" or Hebraic Greek, the various styles being heavily influenced by the underlying Hebrew. A few books, however, show a free and paraphrastic style. Fidelity to the Hebrew is also a variable factor; the translations range from quite accurate to very erroneous and misleading.

*A. Pentateuch.* On the whole, the Pentateuch represents the best translation unit within the LXX. It is distinguished by a uniformly high level of the vernacular style and by faithfulness to the Hebrew, with rare lapses into literalism. It set the standard that later translators imitated, although rarely with the same success. But it does contain a number of secondary readings, frequently shared with the Samaritan Pentateuch. (For a review of the evidence affirming the secondary nature of these shared readings see B. K. Waltke, "The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Text of the OT," in J. B. Payne, ed., *New Perspectives on the OT* [1970], pp. 212–239.) Another problem area in the LXX Pentateuch is its account of the construction of the tabernacle in Ex. 35–40, where the Greek departs markedly from the Hebrew both in order and content. These divergences have been used as an argument for the later composition of the underlying Hebrew, but cf. D. W. Gooding, *Account of the Tabernacle: Translation and Textual Problems of the Greek Exodus* (1959). A tendency to avoid anthropomorphisms in certain parts of the Pentateuch has often been noted — e.g., Josh. 4:24, "power of the Lord" (MT "hand of Yahweh") — but the phenomenon has been the object of some overstatement. Cf. C. T. Fritsch, *The Anti-Anthropomorphisms of the Greek Pentateuch* (1943).

Genesis 34:11–25 in the early cursive script of the Berlin Genesis, a papyrus codex from the end of the 3rd cent A.D. (Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Berlin, Ms. Graec. fol. 66)

*B. Historical Books.* The book of Joshua links the Pentateuch with the later historical books. Although it diverges more often from the MT than the Pentateuch does, the Koine of its translation is otherwise as good as that of the Pentateuch. The most thorough study of the textual problems is M. L. Margolis, *Book of Joshua in Greek* (1931–38).

At the opposite end of the spectrum from the Pentateuch and Joshua is Judges. Two text-types, A and B, exist for this book, both marked by painful literalism, but B more so. It is generally held that A represents the earlier version and that B is a later revision toward the Hebrew. Rahlfs's edition of the LXX prints both texts. The book of Ruth is also rendered with marked literalism.

Samuel-Kings (called in the Greek the four books of [Vol. 4, p. 408] Reigns or Kingdoms) presents an uneven picture. Five translation units were isolated by Thackeray in his pioneering studies of these books: 1 Reigns (α), 2 Reigns 1:1–11:1 (ββ), 2 Reigns 11:2–3 Reigns 2:11 (βγ), 3 Reigns 2:12–21:43 (γγ), and 3 Reigns 22:1–4 Reigns (γδ). This nomenclature is still in use. Thackeray attributed sections βγ and γδ to a later translator whose style was marked by pedantic literalism, but Barthélemy preferred to view the majority text of these sections as an example of the *Kaige* recension (*Devanciers*, pp. 91ff.). 1 and 2 Reigns have often aided textual emendation of the difficult Hebrew text of the corresponding 1 and 2 Samuel. But 3 and 4 Reigns contain a number of peculiarities, including duplicate accounts of certain events (e.g., 3 Reigns 12:24a-z, a second account of the dismemberment of the kingdom; 16:28a-h, a second summary of Jehoshaphat's reign; 4 Reigns 1:18a-d, another summary of Joram's reign) and a chronology of the divided kingdom sharply at variance with the MT. While some have maintained that the Greek of 1 and 2 Reigns represents a recension superior to the MT (e.g., J. D. Shenkel, *Chronology and Recensional Development in the Greek Text of Kings* [1968]), D. W. Gooding showed in a series of articles that the LXX testifies rather to a widespread reordering and reinterpretation of the Hebrew material. For example, Gooding first demonstrated (*VT*, 15 [1965], 153–166) that behind the different order of events in the LXX lies a desire to put things in a strictly logical temporal sequence. The motives may be described as pedantic, sometimes perverse, and mistaken — evidently the work of a literalistically minded reviser (see also *VT*, 15 [1965], 325–335, 405–420; *VT*, 17 [1967], 143–189; R. P. Gordon, *VT*, 25 [1975], 368–393).

Chronicles contains numerous divergences from the MT, but none has the magnitude of those in Reigns; the Greek style, however, remains mediocre. The text has been subjected to a detailed analysis by L. Allen, *Greek Chronicles*, I (*SVT*, 25 [1974]), II (*SVT*, 27 [1974]). The latest historical books, Ezra-Nehemiah and Esther, are problematic in many areas. Of Ezra-Nehemiah there are two versions in Greek, 1 Esdras and 2 Esdras. 1 Esdras

(also called the "Greek Ezra") contains free renderings of various parts of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah. It is interrupted by a long passage (3:1–5:6) that has no equivalent in the Hebrew Bible, the Tale of the Three Guardsmen, from which comes the famous proverb, "Great is Truth, and mighty above all things." 2 Esdras (also called the "Hebrew Ezra") corresponds to the MT Ezra-Nehemiah and is a fairly reliable but literal rendition of it. The different titles by which these books are known cause extreme confusion. *See* ESDRAS, BOOKS OF.

The Greek version of Esther is marked by the addition of six blocks of material not found in the Hebrew. Although dispersed among the various chapters of the canonical Esther, in the Vulgate they are collected as Additions to the Book of Esther and are so titled in modern editions of the apocrypha. The style of the Greek Esther is free and paraphrastic.

*C. Poetic Books.* Among these books the Psalms are the best section and constitute a fairly faithful rendering of the Hebrew. Psalm numbering does not always correspond in the Greek and Hebrew texts because they combine some Psalms differently, e.g., Pss. 9–10, 113–116, 146–147. Ps. 151 was thought to be a late Greek production until the discovery of the Psalms Scroll in Qumrân Cave 11 (11QPsa). J. A. Sanders showed in *Psalms Scroll of Qumran Cave 11 (11QPsa)* (*DJD* 4; 1965), pp. 54–64, that the Greek Psalm actually goes back to two underlying Hebrew poems.

In contrast to Psalms, the books of Job and Proverbs are paraphrastic. The presence of Homeric and classical words in Job and of fragments of iambic and hexametric verse in Proverbs indicate that the translators of both may have known and in part imitated the Greek poets. A special feature of the Greek Job is its being approximately one-sixth shorter than the MT book, which may reflect an already shorter Hebrew *Vorlage* (but cf. D. H. Gard, *Exegetical Method of the Greek Translator of the Book of Job* [1952]). In the Greek MSS and printed editions of Job the lacunae are filled by passages from the version of Theodotion. Whereas Job is shorter in the LXX than in the MT, the Greek Proverbs includes many maxims not found in the Hebrew; some of these may derive from a lost Hebrew collection, but others may be of purely Greek origin.

The other poetic books, Canticles, Ecclesiastes, and Lamentations, are extremely literal translations, hardly intelligible apart from the Hebrew. As

pointed out above, the rendering of Ecclesiastes may derive from Aquila's version or was at least heavily influenced by it.

*D. Prophetic Books.* The Greek of Isaiah is the best in this section, equal to that of the Pentateuch, but is the least faithful to the Hebrew. Because of this free rendering, the use of the LXX of Isaiah in MT textual criticism is severely limited, but the book is proportionately more interesting from the point of view of the translator's theology and exegesis (cf. I. L. Seeligmann, *Septuagint Version of Isaiah* [1948]).

Jeremiah-Ezekiel and the Minor Prophets manifest certain similarities of style and vocabulary and may have been translated ***en bloc*** or nearly so. But multiple-translation theories (e.g., the theory that a certain book was mechanically divided — usually in the middle — and given to different translators) have been proposed for each book. Jer. 30:17–51:32, LXX, is a prime example; cf. the change there of the standard formula ***tade légei kýrios*** to ***hoútōs*** *eípen* ***kýrios***. But these theories have all been challenged, in the case of Jeremiah most recently by E. Tov, *Septuagint Translation of Jeremiah and Baruch: A Discussion of an Early Revision of the LXX of Jer. 29–52 and Baruch 1:1–3:8* (1976). Jeremiah is also interesting on account of its shorter length (about one-eighth shorter than the MT) and its different arrangement of several passages, notably the Oracles Against the Nations. In the MT this section comes at the end of the book (chs. 46–51), while in the Greek it appears in the middle (25:14–31:44). The internal order of the oracles is also entirely different. The Greek almost certainly represents an already shorter Hebrew text, but which of the two traditions (the MT or the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the LXX — both attested in Qumrân fragments) represents the better text remains unresolved, notwithstanding the claims for the superiority of the Greek tradition made by G. Janzen in *Studies in the Text of Jeremiah* (1973). (For a critique of Janzen see S. K. Soderlund, *The Greek Text of Jeremiah: A Revised Hypothesis* [*JSOT Supp.*, 47, 1985], pp. 193–248.)

On the two texts of Daniel, see III.B.2 above.

*E. Books Outside the Hebrew Canon.* The books found in the LXX MSS but not in the Hebrew canon include translated works and original compositions. The Prologue to Sirach specifically states that it was translated from the Hebrew by the author's grandson. In the 19th and 20th cents. large portions of the Hebrew text have come to light, but the Greek text, a mixture

of free and literal renderings, is still indispensable for determining the original Hebrew. Other translated books, it is generally agreed, are 1 Maccabees, Judith, 1 Esdras, the bulk of 2 Esdras, Epistle of Jeremiah, and the first half of Baruch. The style in these books ranges from good Koine in 1 Maccabees to strong [Vol. 4, p. 409] literalism in Baruch 1:1–3:8. Original compositions in Greek include 2–4 Maccabees, Wisdom, Prayer of Manasseh, and the latter part of Baruch. These books are generally composed in literary, pseudoclassical Greek. Other books that may also be Greek compositions but about which no consensus exists are Tobit and the additions to the canonical books of Esther and Daniel.

Codex Sinaiticus (4th cent) of 1 Macc. 9:12f, 20–22; Jer. 9:9f; Tob. 6:5–7, 11f; these three sections were written by different scribes (British Library)

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## 17. ISBE .... H. ST. J. THACKERAY

# **Septuagint** sep'ţŭ-a-jint:

### 1. IMPORTANCE

The Greek version of the OT commonly known as the Septuagint holds a unique place among translations. Its importance is many-sided. Its chief value lies in the fact that it is a version of a Hebrew text earlier by about a millennium than the earliest dated Hebrew MS extant (916 AD), a version, in particular, prior to the formal rabbinical revision of the Hebrew which took place early in the 2nd century AD. It supplies the materials for the reconstruction of an older form of the Hebrew than the MT reproduced in our modern Bibles. It is, moreover, a pioneering work; there was probably no precedent in the world's history for a series of translations from one language into another on so extensive a scale. It was the first attempt to reproduce the Hebrew Scriptures in another tongue. It is one of the outstanding results of the breaking-down of international barriers by the conquests of Alexander the Great and the dissemination of the Greek language, which were fraught with such vital consequences for the history of religion. The cosmopolitan city which he founded in the Delta witnessed the first attempt to bridge the gulf between Jewish and Greek thought. The Jewish commercial settlers at Alexandria, forced by circumstances to abandon their language, clung tenaciously to their faith; and the translation of the Scriptures into their adopted language, produced to meet their own needs, had the further result of introducing the outside world to a knowledge of their history and religion. Then came the most momentous event in its

history, the starting-point of a new life; the translation was taken over from the Jews by the Christian church. It was the Bible of most writers of the NT. Not only are the majority of their express citations from Scripture borrowed from it, but their writings contain numerous reminiscences of its language. Its words are household words to them. It laid for them the foundations of a new religious terminology. It was a potent weapon for missionary work, and, when VSS of the Scriptures into other languages became necessary, it was in most cases the LXX and not the Hebrew from which they were made. Preeminent among these daughter VSS was the Old Latin which preceded the Vulg, for the most part a direct translation from the Hebrew, was in portions a mere revision of the Old Latin; our Prayer-book version of the Psalter preserves peculiarities of the LXX, transmitted through the medium of the Old Latin. The LXX was also the Bible of the early Greek Fathers, and helped to mold dogma; it furnished proof-texts to both parties in the Arian controversy. Its language gives it another strong claim to recognition. Uncouth and unclassical as much of it appears, we now know that this is not wholly due to the hampering effects of translation. "Biblical Greek," once considered a distinct species, is now a rather discredited term. The hundreds of contemporary papyrus records (letters, business and legal documents, etc.) recently discovered in Egypt illustrate much of the vocabulary and grammar and go to show that many so-called "Hebraisms" were in truth integral parts of the κοινῇ, or "common language," i.e. the international form of Greek which, since the time of Alexander, replaced the old dialects, and of which the spoken Greek of today is the lineal descendant. The version was made for the populace and written in large measure in the language of their everyday life.

## 2. NAME

The name "Septuagint" is an abbreviation of *Interpretatio secundum* (or *juxta) Septuaginta seniores* (or *viros)*, i.e. the Greek translation of the OT of which the first installment was, according to the Alexandrian legend (see III, below), contributed by 70 (or 72) elders sent from Jerusalem to Alexandria for the purpose at the request of Ptolemy II. The legend in its oldest form restricts their labors to the Pentateuch but they were afterward credited with the translation of the whole Bible, and before the 4th century it had become customary to apply the title to the whole collection: Aug., *De Civ. Dei*, xviii.42, *"quorum interpretatio ut Septuaginta vocetur iam obtinuit consuetudo"*

("whose translation is now by custom called the Septuagint"). The MSS refer to them under the abbreviation οἱ ο′ ("the seventy"), or οἱ οβ′ ("the seventy-two"). The "Septuagint" and the abbreviated form "LXX" have been the usual designations hitherto, but, as these are based on a now discredited legend, they are coming to be replaced by "the OT in Greek," or "the Alexandrian version" with the abbreviation *"G"*.

### 3. TRADITIONAL ORIGIN

The traditional account of the translation of the Pentateuch is contained in the so-called letter of Aristeas (editions of Greek text, P. Wendland, Teubner series, 1900, and Thackeray in the App. to Swete's *Introduction to the OT in Greek*, 1900, etc.; Wendland's sections cited below appear in Swete's *Introduction*, edition 2; ET by Thackeray, Macmillan, 1904, reprinted from *JQR*, XV, 337, and by H. T. Andrews in Charles' *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the OT*, II, 83–122, Oxford, 1913).

## 1. Letter of Aristeas

The writer professes to be a high official at the court of Ptolemy Philadelphus (285–247 BC), a Greek interested in Jewish antiquities. Addressing his brother Philocrates he describes an embassy to Jerusalem on which he has recently been sent with another courtier Andreas. According to his narrative, Demetrius of Phalerum, a prominent figure in later Athenian history, who here appears as the royal librarian at Alexandria, convinced the king of the importance of securing for his library a translation of the Jewish Law. The king at the same time, to propitiate the nation from whom he was asking a favor, consented, on the suggestion of Aristeas, to liberate all Jewish slaves in Egypt. Copies follow of the letters which passed between Ptolemy and Eleazar, the high priest at Jerusalem. Ptolemy requests Eleazar to select and dispatch to Alexandria 72 elders, proficient in the Law, 6 from each tribe, to undertake the translation the importance of the task requiring the services of a large number to secure an accurate version Eleazar complies with the request and the names of the selected translators are appended to his letter.

There follow:

(1) a detailed description of votive offerings sent by Ptolemy for the temple;

(2) a sketch of Jerusalem, the temple and its services, and the geography of Palestine, doubtless reflecting in part the impressions of an eyewitness and giving a unique picture of the Jewish capital in the Ptolemaic era;

(3) an exposition by Eleazar of portions of the Law.

The translators arrive at Alexandria, bringing a copy of the Law written in letters of gold on rolls of skins, and are honorably received by Ptolemy. A seven days' banquet follows, at which the king tests the proficiency of each in turn with hard questions. Three days later Demetrius conducts them across the mole known as the Heptastadion to the island of Pharos, where, with all necessaries provided for their convenience, they complete their task, as by a miracle, in 72 days; we are expressly told that their work was the result of collaboration and comparison. The completed version was read by Demetrius to the Jewish community, who received it with enthusiasm and begged that a copy might be entrusted to their leaders; a solemn curse was pronounced on any who should venture to add to or subtract from or make any alteration in the translation. The whole version was then read aloud to the king who expressed his admiration and his surprise that Greek writers had remained in ignorance of its contents; he directed that the books should be preserved with scrupulous care.

## 2. Evidence of Aristobulus and Philo

To set beside this account we have two pre-Christian allusions in Jewish writings. Aristobulus, addressing a Ptolemy who has been identified as Philometor (182–146 BC), repeats the statement that the Pentateuch was translated under Philadelphus at the instance of Demetrius Phalereus (Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.*, XIII, 12,664b); but the genuineness of the passage is doubtful. If it is accepted, it appears that some of the main features of the story were believed at Alexandria within a century of the date assigned by "Aristeas" to the translation Philo (*Vit. Moys*, ii.5 ff) repeats the story of the sending of the translators by Eleazar at the request of Philadelphus, adding that in his day the completion of the undertaking was celebrated by an annual festival on the isle of Pharos. It is improbable that an artificial production like the Aristeas letter should have occasioned such an anniversary; Philo's evidence seems therefore to rest in part on an independent tradition. His account in one particular paves the way for later

accretions; he hints at the inspiration of the translators and the miraculous agreement of their separate VSS: "They prophesied like men possessed, not one in one way and one in another, but all producing the same words and phrases as though some unseen prompter were at the ears of each." At the end of the 1st century AD Josephus includes in his *Ant.* (XII, ii, 1 ff) large portions of the letter, which he paraphrases, but does not embellish.

## 3. Later Accretions

Christian writers accepted the story without suspicion and amplified it. A *catena* of their evidence is given in an Appendix to Wendland's edition. The following are their principal additions to the narrative, all clearly baseless fabrications.

(1) The translators worked independently, in separate cells, and produced identical VSS, Ptolemy proposing this test of their trustworthiness. So Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Augustine, the *Chronicon Paschale* and the *Cohortatio ad Graecos* (wrongly attributed to Justin); the author of the last work asserts that he had seen the cells and heard the tradition on the spot.

(2) A modification of this legend says that the translators worked in pairs in 36 cells. So Epiphanius (died 403 AD), and later G. Syncellus, Julius Pollux and Zonaras. Epiphanius' account is the most detailed. The translators were locked up in sky-lighted cells in pairs with attendants and shorthand writers; each pair was entrusted with one book, the books were then circulated, and 36 identical VSS of the whole Bible, canonical and apocryphal books, were produced; Ptolemy wrote two letters, one asking for the original Scriptures, the second for translators.

(3) This story of the two embassies appears already in the 2nd century AD, in Justin's *Apology*, and

(4) the extension of the translators' work to the Prophets or the whole Bible recurs in the two Cyrils and in Chrysostom.

(5) The miraculous agreement of the translators proved them to be no less inspired than the authors (Irenaeus, etc.; compare Philo).

(6) As regards date, Clement of Alexandria quotes an alternative tradition referring the version back to the time of the first Ptolemy (322–285 BC); while Chrysostom brings it down to "a hundred or more years (elsewhere "not many years") before the coming of Christ." Justin absurdly states that Ptolemy's embassy was sent to King Herod; the *Chronicon Paschale* calls the high priest of the time Onias Simon, brother of Eleazar.

Jerome was the first to hold these later inventions up to ridicule, contrasting them with the older and more sober narrative. They indicate a growing oral tradition in Jewish circles at Alexandria. The origin of the legend of the miraculous consensus of the 70 translators has been reasonably sought in a passage in Ex 24 LXX to which Epiphanius expressly refers. We there read of 70 elders of Israel, not heard of again, who with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu form a link between Moses and the people. After reciting the Book of the Covenant Moses ascends to the top of the mount; the 70, however, ascend but a little way and are bidden to worship from afar: according to the LXX text "They saw the place where the God of Israel stood .... and of the elect of Israel not one perished" (Ex 24:11), i.e. they were privileged to escape the usual effect of a vision of the Deity (Ex 33:20). But the verb used for "perish" (διαφωνείν) was uncommon in this sense; "not one disagreed" would be the obvious meaning; hence, apparently the legend of the agreement of the translators, the later intermediaries between Moses and Israel of the Dispersion. When the translations were recited, "no difference was discoverable," says Epiphanius, using the same verb, cave-dwellings in the island of Pharos probably account for the legend of the cells. A curious phenomenon has recently suggested that there is an element of truth in one item of Epiphanius' obviously incredible narrative, namely, the working of the translators in pairs. The Greek books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel fall into two nearly equal parts, apparently the work of separate translators (see VIII, 1, (2), below); while in Exodus, Leviticus and Psalms orthographical details indicate a similar division of the books for clerical purposes. There was, it seems, a primitive custom of transcribing each book on 2 separate rolls, and in the case of Jeremiah and Ezekiel the practice goes back to the time of translation (*JTS*, IV, 245 ff, 398 ff; IX, 88 ff).

### *4. Criticism of the Aristeas Story*

Beside the later extravagances, the story of Aristeas appears comparatively rational. Yet it has long been recognized that much of it is unhistorical, in particular the professed date and nationality of the writer. Its claims to authenticity were demolished by Dr. Hody two centuries ago *(De bibliorum textibus originalibus*, Oxon., 1705). Clearly the writer is not a Greek, but a Jew, whose aim is to glorify his race and to disseminate information about their sacred books. Yet the story is not wholly to be rejected, though it is difficult to disentangle truth from fiction. On one side his veracity has since Hody's time been established; his court titles, technical terms, epistolary formulas, etc., reappear in Egyptian papyri and inscriptions, and all his references to Alexandrian life and customs are probably equally trustworthy (sections 28, 109 ff, measures to counteract the ill effects upon agriculture of migration from country to town; section 167, treatment of informers [compare section 25]; section 175 reception of foreign embassies [compare section 182]). The import of this discovery has, however, since its announcement by Lombroso *(Recherches sur l'economie politique de l'Egypte*, Turin, 1870), been somewhat modified by the new-found papyri which show that Aristeas' titles and formulas are those of the later, not the earlier, Ptolemaic age.

### *5. Date*

The letter was used by Josephus and probably known to Philo. How much earlier is it? Schürer *(HJP*, II, iii, 309 f [*GJV 4*, III, 608–16]), relying on

(1) the questionable Aristobulus passage,

(2) the picture drawn of Palestine as if still under Ptolemaic rule, from which it passed to the Seleucids circa 200 BC,

argued that the work could not be later than that date. But it is hard to believe that a fictitious story (as he regards it to be) could have gained credence within little more than half a century of the period to which it relates, and Wendland rightly rejects so ancient an origin. The following indications suggest a date about 100–80 BC.

(1) Many of Aristeas' formulas, etc. (see above), only came into use in the 2nd century BC (Strack, *Rhein. Mus.*, LV, 168 ff; Thackeray, *Aristeas*, ET, pp. 3, 12).

(2) The later Maccabean age or the end of the 2nd century BC is suggested by some of the translators' names (Wendland, xxvi), and

(3) by the independent position of the high priest.

(4) Some of Ptolemy's questions indicate a tottering dynasty (section 187, etc.).

(5) The writer occasionally forgets his role and distinguishes between his own time and that of Philadelphus (sections 28, 182).

(6) He appears to borrow his name from a Jewish historian of the 2nd century BC and to wish to pass off the latter's history as his own (section 6).

(7) He is guilty of historical inaccuracies concerning Demetrius, etc.

(8) The prologue to the Greek Ecclesiasticus (after 132 BC) ignores and contradicts the Aristeas story, whereas Aristeas possibly used this prologue (Wendland, xxvii; compare Hart, Ecclesiasticus in Greek, 1909).

(9) The imprecation upon any who should alter the translation (section 311) points to divergences of text which the writer desired to check; compare section 57, where he seems to insist on the correctness of the LXX text of Ex 25:22, "gold of pure gold," as against the Hebrew.

(10) Allusions to current criticisms of the Pentateuch (sections 128, 144) presuppose a familiarity with it on the part of non-Jewish readers only explicable if the LXX had long been current.

(11) Yet details in the Greek orthography preclude a date much later than 100 BC.

### *6. Credibility*

The probable amount of truth in the story is ably discussed by Swete (*Intro*, 16–22). The following statements in the letter may be accepted:

(1) The translation was produced at Alexandria, as is conclusively proved by Egyptian influence on its language.

(2) The Pentateuch was translated first and, in view of the homogeneity of style, as a whole.

(3) The Greek Pentateuch goes back to the first half of the 3rd century BC; the style is akin to that of the 3rd-century papyri, and the Greek Genesis was used by the Hellenist Demetrius toward the end of the century.

(4) The Hebrew rolls were brought from Jerusalem.

(5) Possibly Philadelphus, the patron of literature, with his religious impartiality, may have countenanced the work.

But the assertion that it owed its inception wholly to him and his librarian is incredible; it is known from other sources that Demetrius Phalereus did not fill the office of librarian under that monarch. The language is that of the people, not a literary style suitable to a work produced under royal patronage. The importation of Palestinian translators is likewise fictitious. Dr. Swete acutely observes that Aristeas, in stating that the translation was read to and welcomed by the Jewish community before being presented to the king, unconsciously reveals its true origin. It was no doubt produced to meet their own needs by the large Jewish colony at Alexandria. A demand that the Law should be read in the synagogues in a tongue "understanded of the people" was the originating impulse.

### 4. EVIDENCE OF PROLOGUE TO SIRACH

The interesting, though in places tantalizingly obscure, prologue to Ecclesiasticus throws light on the progress made with the translation of the remaining Scriptures before the end of the 2nd century BC.

The translator dates his settlement in Egypt, during which he produced his version of his grandfather's work, as "the 38th year *under* Euergetes the king." The words have been the subject of controversy, but, with the majority of critics, we may interpret this to mean the 38th year of Euergetes II, reckoning from the beginning (170 BC) of his joint reign with Philometor, i.e.

132 BC. Euergetes I reigned for 25 years only. Others, in view of the superfluous preposition, suppose that the age of the translator is intended, but the cumbrous form of expression is not unparalleled. A recent explanation of the date (Hart, *Ecclesiasticus in Greek)* as the 38th year of *Philadelphus* which was also the 1st year of Euergetes I (i.e. 247 BC) is more ingenious than convincing.

The prologue implies the existence of a Greek version of the Law; the Prophets and "the rest of the books." The translator, craving his readers' indulgence for the imperfections of his own work, due to the difficulty of reproducing Hebrew in Greek, adds that others have experienced the same difficulties: "The Law itself and the prophecies and the rest of the books have no small difference when spoken in their original language." From these words we may understand that at the time of writing (132–100 BC) Alexandrian Jews possessed Greek VSS of a large part (probably not the whole) of "the Prophets," and of some of "the Writings" or Hagiographa. For some internal evidence as to the order in which the several books were translated see VIII, below.

### 5. TRANSMISSION OF THE SEPTUAGINT TEXT

The main value of the LXX is its witness to an older Hebrew text than our own. But before we can reconstruct this Hebrew text we need to have a pure Greek text before us, and this we are at present far from possessing. The Greek text has had a long and complex history of its own. Used for centuries by both Jews and Christians it underwent corruption and interpolation, and, notwithstanding the multitude of materials for its restoration, the original text has yet to be recovered. We are much more certain of the *ipsissima verba* of the NT writers than of the original Alexandrian version of the OT. This does not apply to all portions alike. The Greek Pentateuch, e.g., has survived in a relatively pure form. But everywhere we have to be on our guard against interpolations, sometimes extending to whole paragraphs. Not a verse is without its array of variant readings. An indication of the amount of "mixture" which has taken place is afforded by the numerous "doublets" or alternative renderings of a single Hebrew word or phrase which appear side by side in the transmitted text.

### 1. Early Corruption of the Text

Textual corruption began early, before the Christian era. We have seen indications of this in the letter of Aristeas (III, 5, (9) above). Traces of corruption appear in Philo (e.g. his comment, in *Quis Rer. Div. Her.* 56, on Gen 15:15, shows that already in his day ταφεὶς, "buried," had become τραφεὶς, "nurtured," as in all our MSS); doublets already exist. Similarly in the NT the author of Hebrews quotes (12:15) a corrupt form of the Greek of Dt 29:18.

### 2. Official Revision of Hebrew Text circa 100 AD

But it was not until the beginning of the 2nd century AD that the divergence between the Greek and the Palestinian Hebrew text reached an acute stage. One cause of this was the revision of the Hebrew text which took place about this time. No actual record of this revision exists, but it is beyond doubt that it originated in the rabbinical school, of which Rabbi Akiba was the chief representative, and which had its center at Jamnia in the years following the destruction of Jerusalem. The Jewish doctors, their temple in ruins, concentrated their attention on the settlement of the text of the Scriptures which remained to them. This school of eminent critics, precursors of the Massoretes, besides settling outstanding questions concerning the Canon, laid down strict rules for Biblical interpretation, and in all probability established an official text.

### 3. Adoption of Septuagint by Christians

But another cause widened still farther the distance between the texts of Jerusalem and Alexandria. This was the adoption of the LXX by the Christian church. When Christians began to cite the Alexandrian version in proof of their doctrines, the Jews began to question its accuracy. Hence, mutual recriminations which are reflected in the pages of Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*. "They dare to assert," says Justin (*Dial.* , 68), "that the interpretation produced by your seventy elders under Ptolemy of Egypt is in some points inaccurate." A crucial instance cited by the Jews was the rendering "virgin" in Isa 7:14, where they claimed with justice that "young woman" would be more accurate. Justin retaliates by charging the Jews with deliberate excision of passages favorable to Christianity.

### 4. Alternative 2nd Century Greek Versions

That such accusations should be made in those critical years was inevitable, yet there is no evidence of any material interpolations having been introduced by either party. But the Alexandrian version, in view of the revised text and the new and stricter canons of interpretation, was felt by the Jews to be inadequate, and a group of new translations of Scripture in the 2nd century AD supplied the demand. We possess considerable fragments of the work of three of these translators, namely, Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion, besides scanty remnants of further anonymous VSS.

### 5. Aquila

The earliest of "the three" was Aquila, a proselyte to Judaism, and, like his NT namesake, a native of Pontus. He flourished, according to Epiphanius (whose account of these later translators in his *De mens. et pond.* is not wholly trustworthy), under Hadrian (117–38 AD) and was related to that emperor; there is no, probability in Epiphanius' further statement that Hadrian entrusted to Aquila the superintendence of the building of Aelia Capitolina on the site of Jerusalem, that there he was converted to Christianity by Christian exiles returning from Pella, but that refusing to abandon astrology he was excommunicated, and in revenge turned Jew and was actuated by a bias against Christianity in his version of the OT. What is certain is that he was a pupil of the new rabbinical school, in particular of Rabbi Akiba (95–135 AD), and that his version was an attempt to reproduce exactly the revised official text. The result was an extraordinary production, unparalleled in Greek literature, if it can be classed under that category at all. No jot or tittle of the Hebrew might be neglected; uniformity in the translation of each Hebrew word must be preserved and the etymological kinship of different Hebrew words represented. Such were some of his leading principles. The opening words of his translation (Gen 1:1) may be rendered: "In heading founded God with the heavens and with the earth." "Heading" or "summary" was selected because the Hebrew word for "beginning" was a derivative of "head." "With" represents an untranslatable word (אֵת) prefixed to the accusative case, but indistinguishable from the preposition "with." The Divine Name (the tetragrammaton) was not translated, but written in archaic Hebrew characters. "A slave to the letter," as Origen calls him, his work has aptly been described by a modern writer as "a colossal crib" (Burkitt, *JQR*, October, 1896, 207 ff). Yet it was a success. In Origen's time it was used by all Jews ignorant

of Hebrew, and continued in use for several centuries; Justinian expressly sanctioned its use in the synagogues (*Nov.*, 146). Its lack of style and violation of the laws of grammar were not due to ignorance of Greek, of which the writer shows, in vocabulary at least, a considerable command. Its importance lay and lies (so far as it is preserved) in its exact reproduction of the rabbinical text of the 2nd century AD; it may be regarded as the beginning of the scientific study of the Hebrew Scriptures. Though "a bold attempt to displace the LXX," it cannot be charged with being intentionally antagonistic to Christianity. Of the original work, previously known only from extracts in MSS, some palimpsest fragments were recovered from the Cairo Genizah in 1897 and edited by F. C. Burkitt (*Fragments of the Books of Kings*, 1897) and by C. Taylor (*Sayings of the Jewish Fathers 2*, 1897; *Hebrew-Greek Cairo Genizah Palimpsests*, 1900). The student of Swete's OT will trace Aquila's unmistakable style in the footnotes to the Books of Samuel and Kings; the older and shorter B text in those books has constantly been supplemented in the A text from Aquila. A longer specimen of his work occurs in the Greek Ecclesiastes, which has no claim to be regarded as "LXX"; Jerome refers to a second edition of Aquila's version, and the Greek Ecclesiastes is perhaps his first edition of that book, made on the basis of an unrevised Hebrew text (McNeile, *Introduction to Ecclesiastes*, Cambridge, 1904, App. I). The suggested identification of Aquila with Onkelos, author of the Targum of that name, has not been generally accepted.

### 6. Theodotion

Epiphanius' account of the dates and history of Theodotion and Symmachus is untrustworthy. He seems to have reversed their order, probably misled by the order of the translations, in the columns of the Hexapla (see below). He also apparently confused Aquila and Theodotion in calling the latter a native of Pontus. As regards date, Theodotion, critics are agreed, preceded Symmachus and probably flourished under M. Aurelius (161–80), whereas Symmachus lived under Commodus (180–92); Irenaeus mentions only the VSS of Aquila and Theodotion, and that of Symmachus had in his day either not been produced or at least not widely circulated. According to the more credible account of Irenaeus, Theodotion was an Ephesian and a convert to Judaism. His version constantly agrees with the LXX and was rather a revision of it, to bring it into accord with the current Hebrew text, than an independent work. The supplementing of *lacunae* in the LXX (due partly to

the fact that the older version of some books did not aim at completeness) gave scope for greater originality. These lacunae were greatest in Job and his version of that book was much longer than the LXX. The text of Job printed in Swete's edition is a patchwork of old and new; the careful reader may detect the Theodotion portions by transliterations and other peculiarities. Long extracts from Theodotion are preserved in codex Q in Jeremiah. As regards the additional matter contained in LXX, Theodotion was inconsistent; he admitted, e.g., the additions to Daniel (Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, and Song of the Three Children), but did not apparently admit the non-canonical books as a whole. The church adopted his Daniel in place of the inadequate LXX version, which has survived in only one Greek MS; but the date when the change took place is unknown and the early history of the two Greek texts is obscure. Theodotion's renderings have been found in writings before his time (including the NT), and it is reasonably conjectured that even before the 2nd century AD the LXX text had been discarded and that Theodotion's version is but a working over of an older alternative version Theodotion is free from the barbarisms of Aquila, but is addicted to transliteration, i.e. the reproduction of Hebrew words in Greek letters: His reasons for this habit are not always clear; ignorance of Hebrew will not account for all (compare VIII, 1, (5), below).

### 7. Symmachus and Others

Beside the two VSS produced by, and primarily intended for, Jews was a third, presumably to meet the needs of a Jewish Christian sect who were dissatisfied with the LXX. Symmachus, its author, was, according to the more trustworthy account, an Ebionite, who also wrote a commentary on Matthew, a copy of which was given to Origen by Juliana, a lady who received it from its author (Eusebius, *HE*, VI, 17). Epiphanius' description of him as a Samaritan convert to Judaism may be rejected. The date of his work, as above stated, was probably the reign of Commodus (180–192 AD). In one respect the version resembled Aquila's, in its faithful adherence to the *sense* of the current Hebrew text; its style, however, which was flowing and literary, was a revolt against Aquila's monstrosities. It seems to have been a recasting of Aquila's version, with free use of both LXX and Theodotion. It carried farther a tendency apparent in the LXX to refine away the anthropomorphisms of the OT.

Of three other MSS discovered by Origen (one at Nicopolis in Greece, one at Jericho) and known from their position in the Hexapla as *Quinta*, *Sexta*, and *Septima*, little is known. There is no reason to suppose that they embraced the whole OT. *Quinta* is characterized by Field as the most elegant of the Greek VSS. F. C. Burkitt has discussed "the so-called *Quinta* of 4 Kings" in *PSBA*, June, 1902. The Christian origin of *Sexta* betrays itself in Hab 3:13 ("Thou wentest forth to save thy people for the sake of (or "by") Jesus thy anointed One").

### 8. Origen and the Hexapla

These later VSS play a large part in the history of the text of the LXX. This is due to the labors of the greatest LXX scholar of antiquity, the celebrated Origen of Alexandria, whose active life covers the first half of the 3rd century. Origen frankly recognized, and wished Christians to recognize, the merits of the later VSS, and the divergences between the LXX and the current Hebrew. He determined to provide the church with the materials for ascertaining the true text and meaning of the OT. With this object he set himself to learn Hebrew — a feat probably unprecedented among non-Jewish Christians of that time — and to collect the later VSS. The idea of using these VSS to amend the LXX seemed to him an inspiration: "By the gift of God we found a remedy for the divergence in the copies of the OT, namely to use the other editions as a criterion" (*Commentary* on Mt 15:14). The *magnum opus* in which he embodied the results of his labors was known as the *Hexapla* or "six-column" edition. This stupendous work has not survived; a fragment was discovered toward the end of the 19th century in the Ambrosian Library at Milan (Swete, *Introduction*, 61 ff) and another among the Cairo Genizah palimpsests (edition C. Taylor, Cambridge, 1900). The material was arranged in six parallel columns containing

(1) the current Hebrew text,

(2) the same in Greek letters,

(3) the version of Aquila,

(4) that of Symmachus,

(5) that of the LXX,

(6) that of Theodotion.

The text was broken up into short clauses; not more than two words, usually one only, stood in the first column. The order of the columns doubtless represents the degree of conformity to the Hebrew; Aquila's, as the most faithful, heads the VSS, and Symmachus' is on the whole a revision of Aquila as Theodotion's is of the LXX. But Origen was not content with merely collating the VSS; his aim was to revise the LXX and the 5th column exhibited his revised text. The basis of it was the current Alexandrian text of the 3rd century AD; this was supplemented or corrected where necessary by the other VSS. Origen, however, deprecated alteration of a text which had received ecclesiastical sanction, without some indication of its extent, and the construction of the 5th column presented difficulties. There were

(1) numerous cases of words or paragraphs contained in the LXX but not in the Hebrew, which could not be wholly rejected,

(2) cases of omission from the LXX of words in the Hebrew,

(3) cases of paraphrase and minor divergences,

(4) variations in the order of words or chapters.

Origen here had recourse to a system of critical signs, invented and employed by the grammarian Aristarchus (3rd century BC) in his edition of Homer. Passages of the first class were left in the text, but had prefixed to them an *obelus*, a sign of which the original form was a "spit" or "spear," but figuring in LXX MSS as a horizontal line usually with a dot above and a dot below; there are other varieties also. The sign in Aristarchus indicated censure, in the Hexapla the doubtful authority of the words which followed. The close of the obelized passage was marked by the metobelus, a colon (:), or, in the Syriac VSS, shaped like a mallet. Passages missing in the LXX were supplied from one of the other VSS (Aquila or Theodotion), the beginning of the extract being marked by an asterisk — a sign used by Aristarchus to express special approval — the close, by the *metobelus*. Where LXX and

Hebrew widely diverged, Origen occasionally gave two VSS, that of a later translator under an asterisk, that of LXX obelized. Divergence in order was met by transposition, the Hebrew order being followed; in Proverbs, however, the two texts kept their respective order, the discrepancy being indicated by a combination of signs. Minor supposed or real corruptions in the Greek were tacitly corrected. Origen produced a minor edition, the *Tetrapla*, without the first two columns of the larger work. The *Heptapla* and *Octapla*, occasionally mentioned, appear to be alternative names given to the Hexapla at points where the number of columns was increased to receive other fragmentary VSS. This gigantic work, which according to a reasonable estimate must have filled 5,000 leaves, was probably never copied *in extenso*. The original was preserved for some centuries in the library of Pamphilus at Caesarea; there it was studied by Jerome, and thither came owners of Biblical MSS to collate their copies with it, as we learn from some interesting notes in our uncial MSS (e.g. a 7th-century note appended to Esther in codex S). The Library probably perished circa 638 AD, when Caesarea fell into the hands of the Saracens.

### 9. Hexaplaric Manuscripts

But, though the whole work was too vast to be copied, it was a simple task to copy the 5th column. This task was performed, partly in prison, by Pamphilus, a martyr in the Diocletian persecution, and his friend Eusebius, the great bishop of Caesarea. Copies of the "Hexaplaric" LXX, i.e. Origen's doctored text with the critical signs and perhaps occasional notes, were, through the initiative of these two, widely circulated in Palestine in the 4th century. Naturally, however, the signs became unintelligible in a text detached from the parallel columns which explained them; scribes neglected them, and copies of the doctored text, lacking the precautionary symbols, were multiplied. This carelessness has wrought great confusion; Origen is, through others' fault, indirectly responsible for the production of MSS in which the current LXX text and the later VSS are hopelessly mixed. No MSS give the Hexaplaric text as a whole, and it is preserved in a relatively pure form in very few: the uncials G and M (Pentateuch and some historical books), the cursives 86 and 88 (Prophets). Other so-called Hexaplaric MSS, notably codex Q (Marchalianus: Proph.) preserve fragments of the 5th and of the other columns of the Hexapla. (For the Syro-Hexaplar see below, VI, 1.) Yet, even did we possess the 5th column entire, with the complete apparatus of

signs, we should not have "the original LXX," but merely, after removing the asterisked passages, a text current in the 3rd century. The fact has to be emphasized that Origen's gigantic work was framed on erroneous principles. He assumed

(1) the purity of the current Hebrew text,

(2) the corruption of the current LXX text where it deviated from the Hebrew.

The modern critic recognizes that the LXX on the whole presents the older text, the divergences of which from the Hebrew are largely attributable to an official revision of the latter early in the Christian era. He recognizes also that in some books (e.g. Job) the old Greek version was only a partial one. To reconstruct the original text he must therefore have recourse to other auxiliaries beside Origen.

### 10. Recensions Known to Jerome

Such assistance is partly furnished by two other recensions made in the century after Origen. Jerome (*Praef. in Paralipp.;* compare *Adv. Ruf.*, ii.27) states that in the 4th century three recensions circulated in different parts of the Christian world: "Alexandria and Egypt in their LXX acclaim Hesychius as their authority, the region from Constantinople to Antioch approves the copies of Lucian the martyr, the intermediate Palestinian provinces read the MSS which were promulgated by Eusebius and Pamphilus on the basis of Origen's labors, and the whole world is divided between these three varieties of text."

### 11. Hesychian Recension

Hesychius is probably to be identified with the martyr bishop mentioned by Eusebius *(HE*, VIII, 13) along with another scholar martyr, Phileas bishop of Thmuis, and it is thought that these two were engaged in prison in revising the Egyptian text at the time when Pamphilus and Eusebius were employed on a similar task under similar conditions. How far existing MSS preserve the Hesychian recension is uncertain; agreement of their text with that of Egyptian VSS and Fathers (Cyril in particular) is the criterion. For the Prophets Ceriani has identified codex Q and its kin as Hesychian. For the Octateuch N. McLean (*JTS*, II, 306) finds the Hesychian text in a group of cursives, 44, 74,

76, 84, 106, 134, etc. But the first installments of the larger Cambridge LXX raise the question whether Codex B (Vaticanus) may not itself be Hesychian; its text is more closely allied to that of Cyril Alex. than to any other patristic text, and the consensus of these two witnesses against the rest is sometimes (Ex 32:14) curiously striking. In the Psalter also Rahlfs *(Septuaginta-Studien*, 2. Heft, 1907, 235) traces the Hesychian text in B and partially in א. Compare von Soden's theory for the NT.

See TEXT AND MANUSCRIPTS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

### 12. Lucianic Recension

The Lucianic recension was the work of another martyr, Lucian of Antioch (died 311–12), probably with the collaboration of the Hebraist Dorotheus. There are, as Hort has shown, reasons for associating Lucian with a "Syrian" revision of the NT in the 4th century, which became the dominant type of text. That he produced a Syrian recension of the Greek OT is expressly stated by Jerome, and we are moreover able with considerable certainty to identify the extant MSS which exhibit it. The identification, due to Field and Lagarde, rests on these grounds:

(1) certain verses in 2 Kings are in the Arabic Syro-Hexaplar marked with the letter L, and a note explains that the letter indicates Lucianic readings;

(2) the readings so marked occur in the cursives 19, 82, 93, 108, 118;

(3) these MSS in the historical books agree with the LXX citations of the Antiochene Fathers Chrysostom and Theodoret. This clue enabled Lagarde to construct a Lucianic text of the historical books *(Librorum Vet. Test. canonic. pars prior*, Gottingen, 1883); his death prevented the completion of the work.

Lagarde's edition is vitiated by the fact that he does not quote the readings of the individual MSS composing the group, and it can be regarded only as an approximate reconstruction of "Lucian." It is evident, however, that the Lucianic LXX possessed much the same qualities as the Syrian revision of the NT; lucidity and completeness were the main objects. It is a "full" text, the outcome of a desire to include, so far as possible, all recorded matter;

"doublets" are consequently numerous. While this "conflation" of texts detracts from its value, the Lucianic revision gains importance from the fact that the sources from which it gleaned include an element of great antiquity which needs to be disengaged; where it unites with the Old Latin version against all other authorities its evidence is invaluable.

### 6. RECONSTRUCTION OF SEPTUAGINT TEXT; VERSIONS, MANUSCRIPTS AND PRINTED EDITIONS

The task of restoring the original text is beset with difficulties. The materials (MSS, VSS, patristic citations) are abundant, but none has escaped "mixture," and the principles for reconstruction are not yet securely established (Swete, *Introduction*, I, iv-vi; III, vi).

## 1. Ancient Versions Made from Septuagint

Among the chief aids to restoration are the daughter VSS made from the LXX, and above all the Old Latin (pre-Hieronymian) version, for the earliest (African) Old Latin version dates from the 2nd century AD, i.e. before Origen, and contains a text from which the asterisked passages in Hexaplaric MSS are absent; it thus "brings us the best independent proof we have that the Hexaplar signs introduced by Origen can be relied on for the reconstruction of the LXX" (Burkitt). The Old Latin also enables us to recognize the ancient element in the Lucianic recension. But the Latin evidence itself is by no means unanimous. Augustine *(De Doctr. Christ.*, ii.16) speaks of the infinite variety of Latin VSS; though they may ultimately prove all to fall into two main families, African and European. Peter Sabatier's collection of patristic quotations from the Old Latin is still useful, though needing verification by recent editions of the Fathers. Of Old Latin MSS one of the most important is the codex Lugdunensis, edited by U. Robert *(Pentateuchi e codex Lugd. versio Latin antiquissima*, Paris, 1881; *Heptateuchi partis post. versio Latin antiq. e codex Lugd.*, Lyons, 1900). The student should consult also Burkitt's edition of *The Rules of Tyconius* ("Texts and Studies," III, 1, Cambridge, 1894) and *The Old Latin and the Itala* (ibid., IV, 3, 1896).

Jerome's Vulg is mainly a direct translation from the Hebrew, but the Vulg Psalter, the so-called Gallican, is one of Jerome's two revisions of the Old Latin, not his later version from the Hebrew, and some details in our Prayer-book Psalter are ultimately derived through the Vulg. Psalter from the LXX.

Parts of the Apocrypha (Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, 1 and 2 Maccabees) are also pure Old Latin, untouched by Jerome.

The early date (2nd century AD) once claimed for the Egyptian or Coptic VSS (Bohairic, i.e. in the dialect of Lower Egypt, Sahidic or Upper Egyptian and Middle Egyptian) has not been confirmed by later researches, at least as regards the first-named, which is probably not earlier than the 3rd or 4th century AD. Rahlfs *(Sept-Studien*, II, 1907) identifies the Bohairic Psalter as the Hesychian recension. The Sahidic version of Job has fortunately preserved the shorter text lacking the later insertions from Theodotion (Lagarde, *Mittheilungen*, 1884, 204); this does not conclusively prove that it is pre-Origenic; it may be merely a Hexaplaric text with the asterisked passages omitted (Burkitt, *EB*, IV, 5027). The influence of the Hexapla is traceable elsewhere in this version.

The Ethiopic version was made in the main from the Greek and in part at least from an early text; Rahlfs *(Sept. Stud.*, I, 1904) considers its text of S-K, with that of codex B, to be pre-Origenic.

The Vulg or Peshitta Syriac version was made from the Hebrew, though partly influenced by the LXX. But another Syriac version is of primary importance for the LXX text, namely, that of Paul, bishop of Tella (Constantine in Mesopotamia), executed at Alexandria in 616–17 and known as the Syro-Hexaplar. This is a bald Syriac version of the LXX column of the Hexapla, containing the Hexaplar signs. A MS of the poetical and prophetical books is in the Ambrosian Library at Milan and has been edited by Ceriani *(Monumenta sacra et profana*, 1874); fragments of the historical books are also extant (Lagarde and Rahlfs, *Bibliothecae Syriacae*, Gottingen, 1892). This version supplements the Greek Hexaplaric MSS and is the principal authority for Origen's text. For the original version of Daniel, which has survived in only one late MS, the Syro-Hexaplar supplies a second and older authority of great value.

The Armenian version (ascribed to the 5th century) also owes its value to its extreme literalness; its text of the Octateuch is largely Hexaplaric.

A bare mention must suffice of the Arabic version (of which the prophetical and poetical books, Job excluded, were rendered from the LXX); the fragments of the Gothic version (made from the Lucianic recension), and the Slavonic (partly from LXX, also Lucianic) and the Georgian VSS.

## 2. Manuscripts

For a full description of the Greek MSS see Swete, *Introduction*, I, chapter V. They are divided according to their script (capitals or minuscules) into uncials and cursives, the former ranging from the 4th century (four papyrus scraps go back to the 3rd century; Nestle in Hauck-Herzog, *PRE*, XXIII, 208) to the 10th century AD, the latter from the 9th to the 16th century AD. Complete Bibles are few; the majority contain groups of books only, such as the Pentateuch, Octateuch (Genesis-Ruth), the later historical books, the Psalter, the 3 or 5 "Solomonic" books, the Prophets (major, minor or both). Uncials are commonly denoted by capital letters (in the edition of Holmes and Parsons by Roman figures); cursives, of which over 300 are known, by Arabic figures; in the larger Cambridge LXX the selected cursives are denoted by small Roman letters.

The following are the chief uncials containing, or which once contained, the whole Bible: B (Vaticanus, at Rome, 4th century AD), adopted as the standard text in all recent editions; א, at Petersburg and Leipzig, 4th century AD), discovered by Tischendorf in 1844 and subsequent years in Catherine's Convent, Mt. Sinai; A (Alexandrinus, British Museum, probably 5th century AD); C (Ephraemi rescriptus, Paris, probably 5th century), a palimpsest, the older Biblical matter underlying a medieval Greek text of works of Ephrem the Syrian. For the Octateuch and historical books: D (Cottonianus, British Museum, probably 5th or 6th century), fragments of an illuminated Genesis, the bulk of which perished in a fire at Ashburnham House in 1731, but earlier collations of Grabe and others are extant, which for the lost portions are cited in the Cambridge texts as D (*Dsil*, i.e. *silet Grabius*, denotes an inference from Grabe's silence that the MS did not contain a variant); F (Ambro-sianus, Milan, 4th to 5th century), fragments of the Octateuch; G (Sarravianus, fragments at Leyden, Paris and Petersburg, 4th to 5th century), important as containing an Origenic text with the Hexaplar signs; L (Purpureus Vindobonensis, Vienna, 5th to 6th century), fragments of an illuminated MS Genesis on purple vellum; M (Coislinianus, Paris, 7th century), important on

account of its marginal Hexaplaric matter. For the Prophets, Q (Marchalianus, Rome, 6th century) is valuable, both for its text, which is "Hesychian" (see above), and for its abundant marginal Hexaplaric matter. A curious mixture of uncial and cursive writing occurs in E (Bodleianus, probably 10th century), fragments of the historical books (to 3 R 16 28) preserved at Oxford, Cambridge (1 leaf), Petersburg and London; Tischendorf, who brought the MS from the E., retained the tell-tale Cambridge leaf, on which the transition from uncial to cursive script occurs, until his death. The long-concealed fact that the scattered fragments were part of a single MS came to light through Swete's identification of the Cambridge leaf as a continuation of the Bodleian fragment. Many of the cursives still await investigation, as do also the lectionaries. The latter, though the MSS are mainly late, should repay study. The use of the LXX for lectionary purposes was inherited by the church from the synagogue, and the course of lessons may partly represent an old system; light may also be expected from them on the local distribution of various types of text.

## 3. Printed Texts

Of the printed text the first four editions were

(1) the Complutensian Polyglot of Cardinal Ximenes, 1514–17, comprising the Greek, Hebrew and Vulg texts, the last in the middle place of honor being compared to Jesus in the midst between the two thieves (!). The Greek was based on MSS from the Vatican and one from Venice; it exhibits on the whole the Lucianic recension, as the Hesychian is by a curious coincidence represented in

(2) the Aldine edition of 1518, based on Venetian MSS.

(3) The monumental Sixtine edition, published at Rome in 1586 under the auspices of Pope Sixtus V and frequently reprinted, was mainly based on the B, the superiority of which text is justly recognized in the interesting preface (printed in Swete's *Intro).*

(4) The English edition (Oxford, 1707–20) begun by Grabe (died 1712) was based on the codex Alexandrinus, with aid from other MSS, and had the peculiarity that he employed Origen's critical signs and different sizes of type

to show the divergence between the Greek and the Hebrew. Of more recent editions three are preeminent.

(5) The great Oxford edition of Holmes and Parsons (Oxford, 1798–1827, 5 volumes, folio) was the first attempt to bring together in a gigantic *apparatus criticus* all the evidence of uncial and cursive MSS (upward of 300), VSS and early Citations from Philo and Josephus onward. As a monumental storehouse of materials "H. and P." will not be wholly superseded by the latest edition now (1913) in preparation.

(6) The serviceable Cambridge "manual," edition of Swete (lst edition 1887–94, edition 3, 1901–7, 3 volumes, 8vo), is in the hands of all serious LXX students. The text is that of B, or (where B fails) of A, and the apparatus contains the readings of the principal uncial MSS. New materials discovered since the edition of H. and P., especially codex S, are employed, and greater accuracy in the presentation of the other evidence has been made possible by photography. The fact that the text here printed is but a provisional one is sometimes overlooked. Swete's edition was designed as a precursor to

(7) the larger Cambridge LXX, of which three installments embracing the Pentateuch have (1913) appeared *(The OT in Greek,* edition A. E. Brooke and N. McLean, Cambridge, 1911 pt. III. Numbers and Deuteronomy). The text is a reprint of Swete's except that from Exodus onward a few alterations of errors in the primary MS have been corrected, a delicate task in which the editors have rejected a few old readings without sufficient regard to the peculiarities of Hellenistic Greek. The importance of the work lies in its apparatus, which presents the readings of *all* the uncials, VSS and early citations, and those of a careful representative selection of the cursives. The materials of H and P are brought up to date and presented in a more reliable and convenient form. Besides these there is

(8) Lagarde's reconstruction of the Lucianic recension of the historical books, which, as stated, must be used with caution (see above).

## 4. Reconstruction of Original Text

The task of reconstructing the Oldest text is still unaccomplished. Materials have accumulated, and much preliminary "spade-work" has been done, by

Lagarde in particular (see his "axioms" in Swete, *Introduction*, 484, ff) and more recently by Nestle and Rahlfs; but the principles which the editor must follow are not yet finally determined. The extent to which "mixture" has affected the documents is the stumbling-block. Clearly no single MS presents the oldest text. That of codex B, as in the NT, is on the whole the purest. In the 4 books of "Reigns" (1 Samuel through 2 Kings), e.g., it has escaped the grosser interpolations found in most MSS, and Rahlfs *(Sept.-Studien,* I, 1904) regards its text as pre-Origenic. It is, however, of unequal value and by no means an infallible guide; in Judges, e.g., its text is undoubtedly late, no earlier than the 4th century AD, according to one authority (Moore," Judges," *ICC).* In relation to two of the 4th-century recensions its text is neutral, neither predominantly Lucianic nor Hexaplaric; but it has been regarded by some authorities as Hesychian. Possibly the recension made in the country which produced the LXX adhered more closely than others to the primitive text; some "Hesychian" features in the B text may prove to be original. Still even its purest portions contain marks of editorial revision and patent corruptions. A presents a quite different type of text, approximating to that of the MT. In the books of "Reigns" it is practically a Hexaplaric text without the critical signs, the additional matter being mainly derived from Aquila. Yet that it contains an ancient element is shown by the large support given to its readings by the NT and early Christian writers. Individual MSS must give place to groups. In order to reconstruct the texts current before Origen's time, it is necessary to isolate the groups containing the three 4th-century recensions, and to eliminate from the recensions thus recovered all Hexaplaric matter and such changes as appear to have been introduced by the authors of those recensions. Other groups brought to light by the larger Cambridge text have also to be taken into account. The attempt to penetrate into the earlier stages of the history is the hardest task. The Old Latin version is here the surest guide; it has preserved readings which have disappeared from all Greek MSS, and affords a criterion as to the relative antiquity of the Greek variants. The evidence of early Christian and Jewish citations is also valuable. Ultimately, after elimination of all readings proved to be "recensional" or late, the decision between outstanding variants must depend on internal evidence. These variants will fall into two classes:

(1) those merely affecting the Greek text, by far the larger number and presenting less difficulty;

(2) those which imply a different Hebrew text. In adjudicating on the latter Lagarde's main axioms have to be borne in mind, that a free translation is to be preferred to a slavishly literal one, and a translation presupposing another Hebrew original to one based on the MT.

7. NUMBER, TITLES AND ORDER OF BOOKS

## 1. Contents

In addition to the Hebrew canonical books, the LXX includes all the books in the English Apocrypha except 2 Esdras (The Prayer of Manasseh only finds a place among the canticles appended in some MSS to the Psalms) besides a 3rd and 4th book of Maccabees. Swete further includes in his text as an appendix of Greek books on the borderland of canonicity the Psalms of Sololmon (found in some cursives and mentioned in the list in codex A), the Greek fragments of the Book of Enoch and the ecclesiastical canticles above mentioned. Early Christian writers in quoting freely from these additional books as Scripture doubtless perpetuate a tradition inherited from the Jews of Alexandria. Most of the books being original Greek compositions were *ipso facto* excluded from a place in the Hebrew Canon. Greater latitude as regards canonicity prevailed at Alexandria; the Pentateuch occupied a place apart, but as regards later books no very sharp line of demarcation between "canonical" and "uncanonical" appears to have been drawn.

## 2. Titles

Palestinian Jews employed the first word or words of each book of the Pentateuch to serve as its title; Genesis e.g. was denoted "in the beginning," Exodus "(and these are the) names"; a few of the later books have similar titles. It is to the LXX, through the medium of the Latin VSS, that we owe the familiar descriptive titles, mostly suggested by phrases in the Greek version. In some books there are traces of rival titles in the Ptolemaic age. Exodus ("outgoing") is also called Ἔξαγωγή ("leading out") by Philo and by the Hellenist Ezekiel who gave that name to his drama on the deliverance from Egypt. Philo has also alternative names for Deuteronomy — *Epinomis* ("after-law") borrowed from the title of a pseudo-Platonic treatise, and for Judges "the Book of Judgments." The last title resembles the Alexandrian name for the books of Samuel and Kings, namely, the four Books of Kingdoms or

rather Reigns; the name may have been given in the first place to a partial version including only the reigns of the first few monarchs. Jerome's influence in this case restored the old Hebrew names as also in Chronicles (= Hebrew "Words of Days," "Diaries"), which in the LXX is entitled Paraleipomena, "omissions," as being a supplement to the Books of Reigns.

### 3. Bipartition of Books

Another innovation, due apparently to the Greek translators or later editors, was the breaking up of some of the long historical narratives into volumes of more manageable compass. In the Hebrew MSS, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah form respectively one book apiece. In the LXX the first three of these collections are subdivided into two volumes as in modern Bibles; an acquaintance with the other arrangement is, however, indicated in Codex B by the insertion at the end of 1 R, 3 R, 1 Chronicles of the first sentence of the succeeding book, a reminder to the reader that a continuation is to follow. Ezra-Nehemiah, the Greek version (2 Esdras) being made under the influence of Palestinian tradition, remains undivided. Originally Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah formed a unit, as was apparently still the case when the oldest Greek version (1 Esdras) was made.

### 4. Grouping and Order of Books

In the arrangement of books there is a radical departure from Palestinian practice. There were three main unalterable divisions in the Hebrew Bible, representing three stages in the formation of the Canon: Law, Prophets "Former" i.e. Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, and "Latter") and "Writings." This arrangement was known at Alexandria at the end of the 2nd century BC (Sirach, prologue.) but was not followed. The "Writings" were a miscellaneous collection of history and poetry with one prophetical book (Daniel). Alexandrian scholars introduced a more literary and symmetrical system, bringing together the books of each class and arranging them with some regard to the supposed chronological order of their authors. The Law, long before the Greek translation, had secured a position of supreme sanctity; this group was left undisturbed, it kept its precedence and the individual books their order (Leviticus and Numbers, however, exchange places in a few lists). The other two groups are broken up. Ruth is removed from the "Writings" and attached to Judges. Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah are similarly transferred to the end of the historical group. This group, from chronological

considerations, is followed by the poetical and other "Writings," the Prophets coming last (so in B, etc.; in ℵ and A, prophets precede poets). The internal order of the Greek Hagiographa, which includes quasi-historical (Esther, Tobit, Judith) and Wisdom books, is variable. Daniel now first finds a place among the Prophets. The 12 minor prophets usually precede the major ℵ( and Western authorities give the four precedence), and the order of the first half of their company is shuffled, apparently on chronological grounds, Hosea being followed by Amos, Micah, Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Jeremiah has his train of satellites, Baruch, Lamentation (transferred from the "Writings") and Epistle of Jeremiah; Susanna and Bel and the Dragon consort with and form integral parts of Daniel. Variation in the order of books is partly attributable to the practice of writing each book on a separate papyrus roll, kept in a cylindrical case; rolls containing kindred matter would tend to be placed in the same case, but there would be no fixed order for these separate items until the copying of large groups in book-form came into vogue (Swete, *Introduction,* 225 f, 229 f).

### 8. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE VERSION AND ITS COMPONENT PARTS

Notwithstanding the uncertain state of the text, some general characteristics of the version are patent. It is clear that, like the Hebrew itself, it is not a single book, but a library. It is a series of VSS and Greek compositions covering well-nigh 400 years, since it includes a few productions of the 2nd century AD; the bulk of the translations, however, fall within the first half of the period (Sirach, prologue).

## 1. Grouping of Septuagint Books on Internal Evidence

The translations may be grouped and their chronological order approximately determined from certain characteristics of their style.

(1) We may inquire how a Hebrew word or phrase is rendered in different parts of the work. Diversity of renderings is not an infallible proof that different hands have been employed, since invariable uniformity in translation is difficult of attainment and indeed was not the aim of the Pentateuch translators, who seem rather to have studied variety of expression. If, however, a Hebrew word is consistently rendered by one Greek word in one portion and by another elsewhere, and if each of the two

portions has other features peculiar to itself, it becomes highly probable that the two portions are the work of different schools. Among "test-words" which yield results of this kind are "servant" in "Moses the servant of the Lord," "Hosts" in "Lord of Hosts," "Philistines" (Swete, *Introduction*, 317 f; Thackeray, *Grammar of the OT*, 7 ff).

(2) We may compare the Greek with that of dated documents of the Ptolemaic age. The translations were written in the κοινῇ or "common" Greek, most of them in the vernacular variety of it, during a period when this new cosmopolitan language was in the making; the abundant dated papyri enable us to trace some stages in its evolution. The Petrie and Hibeh papyri of the 3rd century BC afford the closest parallels to the Greek Pentateuch. The following century witnessed a considerable development or "degeneracy" in the language, of which traces may be found in the Greek of the prophetical books. Beside the vernacular Greek was the literary language of the "Atticistic" school which persistently struggled, with indifferent success, to recover the literary flavor of the old Greek masterpieces. This style is represented in the LXX by most of the original Greek writings and by the paraphrases of some of the "Writings."

(3) We may compare the Greek books as *translations*, noting in which books license is allowed and which adhere strictly to the Hebrew. The general movement is in the direction of greater literalism; the later books show an increasing reverence for the letter of Scripture, resulting in the production of pedantically literal VSS; the tendency culminated in the 2nd century AD in the barbarisms of Aquila. Some of the "Writings" were freely handled, because they had not yet obtained canonical rank at the time of translation. Investigation on these lines goes to show that the order of the translation was approximately that of the order of the translation was approximately that of the Hebrew Canon. The Greek Hexateuch may be placed in the 3rd century BC, the Prophets mainly in the 2nd century BC, the "Writings" mainly in the 2nd and 1st centuries BC.

## (1) The Hexateuch

The Greek Pentateuch should undoubtedly be regarded as a unit: the Aristeas story may so far be credited. It is distinguished by a uniformly high level of the "common" vernacular style, combined with faithfulness to the

Hebrew, rarely lapsing into literalism. It set the standard which later translators tried to imitate. The text was more securely established in this portion and substantial variant readings are comparatively few. The latter part of Exodus is an exception; the Hebrew had here not reached its final form in the 3rd century BC, and there is some reason for thinking that the version is not the work of the translator of the first half. In Deuteronomy a few new features in vocabulary appear (e.g. ἐκκλησία; see Hort, *Christian Ecclesia*, 4 ff). The Greek version of Josephus forms a link between the Pentateuch and the later historical books. The text was not yet fixed, and variants are more abundant than in the Pentateuch. The earliest version, probably of selections only, appears from certain common features to have been nearly coeval with that of the Law.

## (2) The "Latter" Prophets

There is little doubt that the next books to be translated were the Prophets in the narrower sense, and that Isaiah came first. The style of the Greek Isaiah has a close similarity, not wholly attributable to imitation, to that of the Pentateuch: a certain freedom of treatment connects it with the earlier translation period: it was known to the author of Wisdom (Isa 3:10 with Ottley's note). The translation shows "obvious signs of incompetence" (Swete), but the task was an exacting one. The local Egyptian coloring in the translation is interesting (R. R. Ottley, *Book of Isaiah according to the LXX*, 2 volumes, Greek text of A, translation and notes, Cambridge, 1904–6, with review in *JTS*, X, 299). Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the Minor Prophets were probably translated *en bloc* or nearly so. The Palestinian Canon had now been enlarged by a second group of Scriptures and this stimulated a desire among Alexandrian Jews to possess the entire collection of the Prophets in Greek. The undertaking seems to have been a formal and quasi-official one, not a haphazard growth. For it has been ascertained that Jeremiah and Ezekiel were divided for translation purposes into two nearly equal parts; a change in the Greek style occurs at the junctures. In Jeremiah the break occurs in chapter 29 LXX order); the clearest criterion of the two styles is the twofold rendering of "Thus saith the Lord." The last chapter (Jer 52) is probably a later addition in the Greek. The translator of the second half of Jeremiah also translated the first half of Baruch (1:1–3:8); he was incompetent and his work, if our text may be relied on, affords flagrant examples of Greek words being selected to render words which he did not understand merely

because of their similar sound. Ezekiel is similarly divided, but here the translator of the first half (chapters 1–27) undertook the difficult last quarter as well (chapters 40–48), the remainder being left to a second worker. An outstanding test is afforded by the renderings of the refrain, "They shall know that I am the Lord." The Greek version of "the twelve" shows no trace of a similar division; in its style it is closely akin to the first half of Ezekiel and is perhaps by the same hand (JTS, IV, 245, 398, 578). But this official version of the Prophets had probably been preceded by VSS of short passages selected to be read on the festivals in the synagogues. *Lectionary requirements occasioned the earliest versions of the Prophets*, possibly of the Pentateuch as well. Two indications of this have been traced. There exists in four MSS a Greek version of the Psalm of Habakkuk (Hab 3), a chapter which has been a Jewish lesson for Pentecost from the earliest times, independent of and apparently older than the LXX and made for synagogue use. Similarly in Ezekiel of the LXX there is a section of sixteen verses (36:24–38) with a style quite distinct from that of its context. This passage was also an early Christian lesson for Pentecost, and its lectionary use was inherited from Judaism. Here the LXX translators seem to have incorporated the older version, whereas in Hab 3 they rejected it (*JTS*, XII, 191; IV, 407).

### (3) Partial Version of the "Former" Prophets

The Greek style indicates that the history of the monarchy was not all translated at once. Ulfilas is said to have omitted these books from the Gothic version as likely to inflame the military temper of his race; for another reason the Greek translators were at first content with a partial version. They omitted as unedifying the more disastrous portions, David's sin with the subsequent calamities of his reign and the later history of the divided monarchy culminating in the captivity. Probably the earliest VSS embraced only

(1) 1 R,

(2) 2 R 1:1–11:1 (David's early reign),

(3) 3 R 2:12–21:13 (Solomon and the beginning of the divided monarchy);

the third book of "Reigns" opened with the accession of Solomon (as in Lucian's text), not at the point where 1 Kings opens. These earlier portions are written in a freer style than the rest of the Greek "Reigns," and the Hebrew original differed widely in places from that translated in the English Bible (*JTS*, VIII, 262).

**(4) The "Writings."**

The Hagiographa at the end of the 2nd century BC were regarded as national literature. (Sirach, prolegomena "the other books of our fathers"), but not as canonical. The translators did not scruple to treat these with great freedom, undeterred by the prohibition against alteration of Scripture (Dt 4:2; 12:32). Free paraphrases of extracts were produced, sometimes with legendary additions. A partial version of Job (one-sixth being omitted) was among the first; Aristeas, the historian of the 2nd century BC, seems to have been acquainted with it (Freudenthal, *Hellenistische Studien*, 1875, 136 ff). The translator was a student of the Greek poets; his version was probably produced for the general reader, not for the synagogues. Hatch's theory (*Essays in Biblical Greek*, 1889, 214) that his Hebrew text was shorter than ours and was expanded later is untenable; avoidance of anthropomorphisms explains some omissions, the reason for others is obscure. The first Greek narrative of the return from exile (1 Esdras) was probably a similar version of extracts only from Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah, grouped round a fable of non-Jewish origin, the story of the 3 youths at the court of Darius. The work is a fragment, the end being lost, and it has been contended by some critics that the version once embraced the whole of Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah (C. C. Torrey, *Ezra Studies*, Chicago, 1910). The Greek is obviously earlier than Esdras B and is of great value for the reconstruction of the Hebrew. The same translator appears from peculiarities of diction to have produced the earliest version of Daniel, treating it with similar freedom and incorporating extraneous matter (Song of the Three Children, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon). The maximum of interpolation is reached in Esther, where the Greek additions make up two-thirds of the story. The Greek Proverbs (probably 1st century BC) includes many maxims not in the Hebrew; some of these appear to be derived from a lost Hebrew collection, others are of purely Greek origin. This translator also knew and imitated the Greek classics; the numerous fragments of iambic and hexameter verse in the translation cannot be accidental (*JTS*, XIII, 46). The Psalter is the one translation in this

category in which liberties have not been taken; in Ps 13:3 (14) the extracts from other parts of Psalms and from Isaiah included in the B text must be an interpolation possibly made before Paul's time (Rom 3:13 ff), or else taken from Romans. The little Ps 151 in LXX, described in the title as an "autograph" work of David and as "outside the number," is clearly a late Greek production, perhaps an appendix added after the version was complete.

### (5) The Latest Septuagint Translations

The latest VSS included in the LXX are the productions of the Jewish translators of the 2nd century AD; some books may be rather earlier, the work of pioneers in the new school which advocated strict adherence to the Hebrew. The books of "Reigns" were now completed, by Theodotion, perhaps, or by one of his school; the later portions (2 R 11:2–3 R 2:11, David's downfall, and 3 R ch 22–4 R end, the downfall of the monarchy) are by one hand, as shown by peculiarities in style, e.g. "I am have with child" (2 R 11:5) = "I am with child," a use which is due to desire to distinguish the longer form of the pronoun אָנֹכִי ("I," also used for "I am") from the shorter אֲנִי. A complete version of Judges was now probably first made. In two cases the old paraphrastic VSS were replaced. Theodotion's Daniel, as above stated, superseded in the Christian church the older version A new and complete version of Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah was made (Esdras B), though the older version retained its place in the Greek Bible on account of the interesting legend imbedded in it; the new version is here again possibly the work of Theodotion; the numerous transliterations are characteristic of him (Torrey, Ezra Studies; theory had previously been advanced by Sir H. Howorth). In the Greek Ecclesiastes we have a specimen of Aquila's style (see McNeile's edition, Cambridge, 1904). Canticles is another late version.

## 2. General Characteristics

A marked feature of the whole translation is the scrupulous avoidance of anthropomorphisms and phrases derogatory to the divine transcendence. Thus Ex 4:16, "Thou shalt be to him in things pertaining to God" (Hebrew "for" or "as God"); 15:3, "The Lord is a breaker of battles" (Hebrew "a Man of war"); 24:10, "They saw the place where the God of Israel stood" (Hebrew "they saw the God of Israel"); 24:11, "Of the elect of Israel not one perished and they were seen in the place of God" (Hebrew "Upon the nobles .... He laid not His hand, and they beheld God"). The comparison of God to a rock

was consistently paraphrased as idolatrous, as was sometimes the comparison to the sun from fear of sun-worship (Ps 83:12, (84) "The Lord loves mercy and truth" for Hebrew "The Lord is a sun and shield"). "The sons of God" (Gen 6:2) becomes "the angels of God." For minor liberties, e.g. slight amplifications, interpretation of difficult words, substitution of Greek for Hebrew coinage, translation of place-names, see Swete, *Introduction*, 323 ff. Blunders in translation are not uncommon, but the difficulties which these pioneers had to face must be remembered, especially the paleographical character of the Hebrew originals. These were written on flimsy papyrus rolls, in a script probably in a transitional stage between the archaic and the later square characters; the words were not separated, and there were no vowel-points; two of the radicals (ח and י) were also frequently omitted. Add to this the absence at Alexandria, for parts at least of the Scriptures, of any sound tradition as to the meaning. On the other hand the vocalization adopted by the translators, e.g. in the proper names, is of great value in the history of early Semitic pronunciation. It must further be remembered that the Semitic language most familiar to them was not Hebrew but Aramaic, and some mistakes are due to Aramaic or even Arabic colloquialisms (Swete, *Introduction*, 319).

### 9. SALIENT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GREEK AND HEBREW TEXTS

Differences indicating a Hebrew original other than the MT affect either the sequence or the subject-matter (compare Swete, *Introduction*, 231 ff).

## 1. Sequence

The most extensive discrepancies in arrangement of materials occur in

(1) Ex 35–39, the construction of the Tabernacle and the ornaments of its ministers,

(2) 3 R ch 4–11, Solomon's reign,

(3) Jeremiah (last half),

(4) Proverbs (end).

(1) In Exodus the LXX gives precedence to the priests' ornaments, which in the Hebrew follow the account of the Tabernacle, and omits altogether the altar of incense. The whole section describing the execution of the instructions given in the previous chapters in almost identical words is one of the latest portions of the Pentateuch and the text had clearly not been finally fixed in the 3rd century BC; the section was perhaps absent from the oldest Greek version In Ex 20:13–15 Codex B arranges three of the commandments in the Alexandrian order (7, 8, 6), attested in Philo and in the NT.

(2) Deliberate rearrangement has taken place in the history of Solomon, and the LXX unquestionably preserves the older text. The narrative of the building of the Temple, like that of the Tabernacle, contains some of the clearest examples of editorial revision in the MT (Wellhausen, *History of Israel*, 67, 280, etc.). At the end of 3 R LXX places chapters 20 and 21 in their proper order; MT reverses this, interposing the Naboth story in the connected account of the Syriac wars and justifying the change by a short preface.

(3) In Jeremiah the chapter numbers differ from the middle of chapter 25 to the end of chapter 51, the historical appendix (chapter 52) concluding both texts. This is due to the different position assigned to a group of prophecies against the nations: LXX places them in the center, MT at the end. The items in this group are also rearranged. The diversity in order is earlier than the Greek translation; see *JTS*, IV; 245.

(4) The order of some groups of maxims at the end of Proverbs was not finally fixed at the time of the Greek translation; like Jeremiah's prophecies against the nations, these little groups seem to have circulated as late as the 2nd or 1st century BC as separate pamphlets. The Psalms numbers from ch 10 to ch 147 differ by one in LXX and MT, owing to discrepancies in the lines of demarcation between individual psalms.

## 2. Subject Matter

Excluding the end of Exodus, striking examples of divergence in the Pentateuch are few. LXX alone preserves Cain's words to his brother, "Let us go into the field" (Gen 4:8). The close of Moses' song appears in an expanded form in LXX (Dt 32:43). Similarly Hannah's song in 1 R 2 (? originally a warrior's triumph-song) has been rendered more appropriate to

the occasion by the substitution in verse 8c of words about the answer to prayer, and enlarged by the insertion of a passage from Jeremiah; the changes in both songs may be connected with their early use as canticles. In Joshua the larger amount of divergence suggests that this book did not share the peculiar sanctity of the Law. But the books of "Reigns" present the widest differences and the fullest scope for the textual critic. The LXX here proves the existence of two independent accounts of certain events. Sometimes it incorporates both, while the MT rejects one of them; thus LXX gives (3 R 2:35a ff, 46a ff) a connected summary of events in Solomon's personal history; most of which appear elsewhere in a detached form, 3 R 12:24a-z is a second account of the dismemberment of the kingdom; 16:28a-h a second summary of Jehoshaphat's reign (compare 22:41 ff); 4 R 1 18a another summary of Joram's reign (compare 3 1 ff). Conversely in 1 R 17–18, MT has apparently preserved two contradictory accounts of events in David's early history, while LXX presents a shorter and consistent narrative (Swete, *Intro*, 245 f). An "addition" in LXX of the highest interest appears in 3 R 8:53b, where a stanza is put into the mouth of Solomon at the Temple dedication, taken from "the Song-book" (probably the Book of Jashar); the MT gives the stanza in an edited form earlier in the chapter (8:12 f); for the reconstruction of the original Hebrew see *JTS*, X, 439; XI, 518. The last line proves to be a title, "For the Sabbath — On Alamoth" (i.e. for sopranos), showing that the song was set to music for liturgical purposes. In Jeremiah, besides transpositions, the two texts differ widely in the way of excess and defect; the verdict of critics is mainly in favor of the priority of the LXX (Streane, *Double Text of Jeremiah*, 1896). For divergences in the "Writings" see VIII, above; for additional titles to the Psalms see Swete, *Introduction*, 250 f.

## LITERATURE

The most important works have been mentioned in the body of the article. See, further, the very full lists in Swete's *Introduction* and the bibliographies by Nestle in *PRE 3*, III, 1–24, and XXIII, 207–10 (1913); *HDB*, IV, 453–54.

H. ST. J. THACKERAY

## 18. John Owen and the LXX

## John Owen Again on the Septuagint (LXX) Issue Related to the Presuppositions for the Preservation of Scripture, Meanwhile Answering James White

So many words in a title. This post is mainly about what John Owen wrote. I am teaching the book of Hebrews to folks at Mid-Coast Baptist Church next week in Brunswick, Maine. I've taught through Hebrews three times in my life, but I have been doing some reading. You can download for free the pdf of a five volume commentary by John Owen on Hebrews, which is too much to read before I go, but I wanted to see some things that John Owen said about Hebrews, to get his thoughts. It was helpful in one way that is not related to Hebrews itself.

When James White began attempting to talk about his own scriptural presuppositions, and it began looking like someone walking through thick mud up to his neck, he dropped "Jesus' use of the Septuagint." He said it very haltingly. I can only guess why he wasn't really chipper about bringing that up, but my speculation is that he knows it doesn't work, that it doesn't count as a presupposition for a defensible position on preservation. It is just another dust cloud. If you take the argument to its end, which I'm sure he hopes someone does not, it crashes and burns big time.

Old Testament textual critics now correct the traditional text of the Old Testament by using "the Septuagint and the Dead Sea Scrolls." I'm sure to some people that sounds really neat. They are saying that the Old Testament needs correcting. They can't even stop with the Old Testament, so what hope is there that they can or will with the New Testament?

I can't write everything about this, because I've got to get to the John Owen point I was making. I'm pretty sure no one has this material out there and I want you to have it. However, before I do, can you for a moment wrap your brain around the idea that these OT textual critics are using a Greek translation from the Hebrew to correct the Hebrew? These are some of the same men who criticize Erasmus for "back translating from the Latin to the Greek in Revelation." That's only bad when it helps their cause. I've never said I was opposed at the preservation of God's Word in languages other than the original languages. I'm happy about Latin speaking people having the Bible in their language. But I digress. I don't want to turn this into a session on Erasmus. Neither do I want to go off on the criticism of eclectic text supporters that it is wrong to take a trajectory from an English translation to its underlying text. They, of course, can only accept that when it travels through a Greek translation into a Hebrew text, eradicating their complaint about trajectories to original language texts from their translations.

If you believe that Jesus quoted from "the Septuagint," you are left with a low view of scripture. You then believe that the Hebrew text of the Old Testament was lost. You also believe that Jesus was very satisfied with a corrupt translation from a corrupt text that differed from the Old Testament text received by God's people. Even the Old Testament textual critic believes his Septuagint is corrupt.

Reader, you may wonder why I put "the Septuagint" in quotes. There is no settled Septuagint. You are not referring to one translation when you say "the Septuagint." There is no "the Septuagint," and most textual critics like White would be happy to have you keep thinking that way. There is little evidence that some established Greek translation of the Old Testament existed before Jesus from which He could quote. The view we should take should be the one that respects the inerrancy of scripture the most. Saying that Jesus quoted the Septuagint doesn't do that.

A position that does respect the Bible and is a historic position based on biblical presuppositions is the one taken by John Owen that I have also read in some more contemporary books on the Septuagint. Hebrews quotes a lot of Old Testament, especially Psalm 110. In Owen's first volume on Hebrews, he spends a few pages speaking on this issue that we're talking about. I'm not going to give you all the pages. I'm going to give you the explanatory quote. Owen writes (pp. 67-68):

Concerning these, and some other places, many confidently affirm, that the apostle waved the original, and reported the words from the translation of the LXX. . . . [T]his boldness in correcting the text, and fancying without proof, testimony, or probability, of other ancient copies of the Scripture of the Old Testament, differing in many things from them which alone remain, and which indeed were ever in the world, may quickly prove pernicious to the church of God. . . . [I]t is highly probable, that the apostle, according to his wonted manner, which appears in almost all the citations used by him in this epistle, reporting the sense and import of the places, in words of his own, the Christian transcribers of the Greek Bible inserted his expressions into the text, either as judging them a more proper version of the original, (whereof they were ignorant) than that of the LXX., or out of a preposterous zeal to take away the appearance of a diversity between the text and the apostle's citation of it. And thus in those testimonies where there is a real variation from the Hebrew original, the apostle took not his words from the translation of the LXX. but his words were afterwards inserted into that translation.

Owen says more, but this is the essence of it from the Hebrews commentary. He's got a whole section on it in his biblical theology too, which was only recently translated from the Latin. This is Owen's position. This was an accepted position. This fits biblical presuppositions. It is also a defensible position. White's position is not defensible. "The Septuagint" sometimes follows the Hebrew Masoretic and sometimes it doesn't. White and others selectively use it. With their usage, they are in very murky waters theologically. Owen's position is an old position. It's what believers have thought. You actually can't prove him wrong. His position has theological underpinning. His position should be believed. I believe it.

19. Hieronimus oor LXX

« A Word of Thanks
Barker Mythology Debate »

# Jerome Regarding the Septuagint

I recently happened to stumble across this interesting translation of Jerome's Prologue to Chronicles (link). Jerome makes a number of interesting comments about the Septuagint:

1) Jerome begins by noting that the Septuagint is not a pure translation:

> If the version of the Seventy translators is pure and has remained as it was rendered by them into Greek … Now, in fact, when different versions are held by a variety of regions, and this genuine and ancient translation is corrupted and violated, you have considered our opinion, either to judge which of the many is the true one, or to put together new work with old work, and shutting off to the Jews, as it is said, "a horn to pierce the eyes."

– Jerome, Prologue to Chronicles

2) Jerome continues by noting that in his day it was famous that there were three regional varieties of the Septuagint:

> The region of Alexandria and Egypt praises in their Seventy the authority of Hesychius; the region from Constantinople to Antioch approves the version of Lucian the Martyr; in the middle, between these provinces, the people of Palestine read the books which, having been labored over by Origen, Eusebius and Pamphilius published.

– Jerome, Prologue to Chronicles

3) Jerome argues that although Jesus knew the Septuagint translation, he used the Hebrew, arguing from various passages:

I have recently written a book, "On the best kind of translating," showing these things in the Gospel, and others similar to these, to be found in the books of the Hebrews: "Out of Egypt I called my son," and "For he will be called a Nazarene," and "They will look on him whom they have pierced," and that of the Apostle, "Things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, and had not arisen in the heart of man, which God has prepared for those loving Him." The Apostles and Evangelists were certainly acquainted with (the version of) the Seventy interpreters, but from where (were) they (supposed) to say these things which are not in the Seventy?

– Jerome, Prologue to Chronicles

4) Jerome notes that the church of his day did not accept the apocrypha, but only the Hebrew books, as can be seen from the middle of Jerome's punchline for his argument about the Septuagint:

Certainly, whatever is witnessed by the Savior to be written, is written. Where is it written? The Seventy don't have it; the Church ignores the apocrypha; thus the turning back to the Hebrew (books), from which the Lord spoke and and the disciples took forth texts.

– Jerome, Prologue to Chronicles

5) In the conclusion of the prologue, Jerome explains the fact that he was coming under a lot of fire for his new translation, since popular opinion was fond of (their own version of) the Septuagint:

In peace I will say these things of the ancients, and I respond only to my detractors, who bite me with dogs' teeth, slandering me in public, speaking at corners, the same (being) both accusers and defenders, when approving for others what they reprove me for, as though virtue and error were not in conflict, but change with the author. I have recalled another edition of the Seventy translators corrected from the Greek to have been distributed by us, and me not to need to be considered their enemy, which things I always explain in the gatherings of the brothers.

– Jerome, Prologue to Chronicles

Thanks very much to Kevin P. Edgecomb who provided this translation and released it into the public domain.

-TurretinFan

UPDATE:

One Roman Catholic reader (I'm not sure whether he'd want attribution or not, so I've not given it to him for now. If he wants it, he knows how to let me know) pointed me to the fact that one can find translations of many of the prologues to the Vulgate books (link). Some have suggested that the later prologues show Jerome softening in his opposition to the apocrypha, though you will note:

Also included is the book of the model of virtue Jesus son of Sirach, and another falsely ascribed work which is titled Wisdom of Solomon. The former of these I have also found in Hebrew, titled not Ecclesiasticus as among the Latins, but Parables, to which were joined Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs, as though it made of equal worth the likeness not only of the number of the books of Solomon, but also the kind of subjects. The second was never among the Hebrews, the very style of which 18is redolent of Greek speech. And several of the ancient scribes affirm this one is of Philo Judaeus. Therefore, just as the Church also reads the books

of Judith, Tobias, and the Maccabees, but does not receive them among the canonical Scriptures, so also one may read these two scrolls for the strengthening of the people, (but) not for confirming the authority of ecclesiastical dogmas.

– Jerome, Prologue to the books of Solomon

Similarly:

This prologue to the Scriptures may be appropriate as a helmeted introduction to all the books which we turn from Hebrew into Latin, so we may be able to know whatever is outside of these is to be set apart among the apocrypha. Therefore, Wisdom, which is commonly ascribed to Solomon, and the book of Jesus son of Sirach, and Judith and Tobias, and The Shepherd are not in the canon. I have found the First Book of the Maccabees is Hebrew, the Second is Greek, which may also be proven by their styles.

– Jerome, Prologue to the Book of Kings

Yet it was demanded of Jerome that he translate the Apocrypha, to which command he grudgingly complied:

I do not cease to wonder at the constancy of your demanding. For you demand that I bring a book written in the Chaldean language into Latin writing, indeed the book of Tobias, which the Hebrews exclude from the catalogue of Divine Scriptures, being mindful of those things which they have titled Hagiographa. I have done enough for your desire, yet not by my study. For the studies of the Hebrews rebuke us and find fault with us, to translate this for the ears of Latins contrary to their canon. But it is better to be judging the opinion of the Pharisees to displease and to be subject to the commands of bishops. I have persisted as I have been able, and because the language of the Chaldeans is close to Hebrew speech, finding a speaker very skilled in both languages, I took to the work of one day, and whatever

he expressed to me in Hebrew words, this, with a summoned scribe, I have set forth in Latin words.

– Jerome, Prologue to Tobias

Likewise:

Among the Hebrews the Book of Judith is found among the Hagiographa, the authority of which toward confirming those which have come into contention is judged less appropriate. Yet having been written in Chaldean words, it is counted among the histories. But because this book is found by the Nicene Council to have been counted among the number of the Sacred Scriptures, I have acquiesced to your request, indeed a demand, and works having been set aside from which I was forcibly curtailed, I have given to this (book) one short night's work translating more sense from sense than word from word. I have removed the extremely faulty variety of the many books; only those which I was able to find in the Chaldean words with understanding intact did I express in Latin ones.

– Jerome, Prologue to Judith (It's not clear to me whether Jerome was being confused or sarcastic. Nicaea did not decide the canon, and had they done so, one would hardly expect the later councils of Hippo and Carthage to omit reference to this fact.)

To God be the Glory!

**Let your friends know:**

## 20. Anchor ….. MELVIN K. H. PETERS