
A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

THE VALUE OF THE SEPTUAGINT.[1]

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IT has been said, with a great deal of truth, that the work of the Bible Society had its first beginnings in Alexandria under the Ptolemies; for it was there that the earliest translation of the Bible —that is of the O.T. so far as it then existed—was made. It was fitting that Alexandria should have been the birthplace of the LXX. If, naturally and by right, Jerusalem was the peculiar home of those writings we know as the O.T., inasmuch as it was, above all other places, the Holy City, round which clustered the most sacred traditions of the Jews, and within which were to be found Jewry's most eminent teachers and eloquent doctors of the Law; we must not overlook the fact that, next to Jerusalem itself, Alexandria was the most Jewish centre. It was a comparatively new city, founded about the year 330 B.C. by Alexander the Great; but it was destined to become the capital of an Hellenic kingdom established in immemorial Egypt, and to be a mighty centre of trade, literature, and science. Among its famous buildings was the great Museum, with its endowments, its fellowships, its lecture-rooms, and its students. The presidency of that Museum—or University, as we might call it—was in the gift of the King, with all the prestige that belongs to such an office; and when Egypt became part of the Roman Empire, the President was appointed by the Emperor himself. There was a library there, which was reckoned the chief glory of the Museum; more than a million volumes (or rolls) were housed in it, and scholars flocked to examine its all but inexhaustible treasures; and few severer calamities have ever befallen any supreme place of learning than the destruction of a large part of this great collection of manuscripts by fire (so we are told) during the civil war between Cæsa and Pompey. By that disaster nearly half a million rolls were lost.

Now one of the most remarkable features about Alexandria was its vast Ghetto. In this quarter of the city was housed a large colony of Jews; some had been brought there, originally, as captives, but, as time went on, many emigrated voluntarily, attracted by the growing wealth and amenities of the place. A return to Egypt, indeed, to what had once been the House of Bondage, but had now become a centre of life and movement. It was inevitable, perhaps, that these Alexandrian Jews should gradually lose touch with the intellectual life of Jerusalem; they soon forgot their own sacred tongue, Hebrew, and adopted Greek—which, by the time their settlement had become consolidated, was everywhere regarded as the "lingua franca" of the Near East. But if they forgot their own language, they had not forgotten their religion; and it presently became a matter of importance that they should possess their sacred scriptures (which they could no longer read in the original) in the current vernacular.

[1] The substance of a lecture given at Cambridge in August, 1932.

Therefore a movement gradually arose to have a translation of those scriptures in Greek. How, precisely, this translation was shaped, it is not easy to say; there are no records of the Alexandrian Synagogue remaining now, to tell us the real story. Nevertheless a story there is, which purports to state the facts, in the shape of a long letter written by a certain Aristeas to his brother. This celebrated letter professes to give a contemporary account of the translation of the "Pentateuch" into Greek, in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus (that is, during the first half of the third century B.C.). And here, in briefest form, is the story that Aristeas has left us.

King Ptolemy, anxious to have a complete collection of the laws of all nations, for the purpose of including copies in the great library, was urged by his librarian to secure a Greek translation of the Jewish scriptures. Accordingly the king sent an Embassy to Jerusalem to ask for the help of the learned scribes in that city. By the good offices of Eleazar, the high priest, a band of learned men—seventy-two, that is six from each of the twelve Tribes—was dispatched to Egypt, where they were bidden to set about the task of translation. These met on an island, off the coast, for seventy-two days continuously, at the end of which period their task was accomplished. The story of Aristeas seems to recognise the translation of the Law only—viz. the Torah, or five books of Moses, always regarded by orthodox Jews as the most sacred part of their canon; but later writers rather imply that the translation included all the canonical books of the Jews. Obviously this story is thoroughly untrustworthy; but, like the stories of the early kings of Rome, it may contain certain elements of truth. The date of the letter of Aristeas remains unsettled.

The title "Septuagint" is a natural one, based as it is on the old tradition of the seventy-two elders. It may be as well to note here that the LXX as we have it to-day contains not only the O.T. as it is familiar to us in our Bibles, but also certain added books, some of which have no Hebrew original but were composed in Greek. At some date—no longer known—the Jews were careful to purge their canon, and works retained in the Greek Bible but not found in the Hebrew were called Apocrypha, a word originally without any sinister connotation. However, as they were not counted genuine by the Jews, these apocryphal books were excluded by the Protestant Reformers from our canon, though the Church of Rome declared them to be canonical at the Council of Trent, and they appear in the Vulgate.

There are four principal manuscripts of the Greek Bible, but for English people the most interesting is the Codex Alexandrinus (A), now kept at the British Museum, where it is reckoned one of its chief treasures. It was presented by the Patriarch of Constantinople to King Charles I, and the MS. remained in the royal library till it was presented to the nation by George II. The Patriarch had brought it from Alexandria, where it was probably transcribed some time during the fifth century. Like the majority of the greater MSS. of the Bible, it is written on vellum in uncial (or capital) letters. It is interesting to remember that it was the first of these greater MSS. to be made

accessible to scholars—and that, as far back as the early part of the eighteenth century, though it was not reproduced in photogravure till about fifty years ago. It may be as well to state that in our British Museum MS. the books of the O.T. do not appear quite as we are accustomed to see them in our own A.V., and the names are not always the same: thus what we know as the books of Chronicles are called Paralipomena—"things left out." Other points of interest are these: after the Psalms are written out certain poems like Miriam's Song, and some of the Canticles; and the Psalter contains 151 psalms—not 150 as we reckon them to-day. Again: the LXX sometimes contains less, sometimes more, than the Hebrew original. And as the manuscripts of the LXX are older than any existing Hebrew MSS., it has been conjectured that the Greek version bears witness to an older text than the Hebrew, as we know it. Observe, too, that the Pentateuch (the first portion of the O.T. to be translated) shows less difference between Hebrew and Greek than other portions of the O.T. The reason (as I have already remarked) is this: an extraordinary sanctity was attached to the Torah, or Law, and the care taken to preserve the text unimpaired was greater than that taken elsewhere. Yet even in the Torah we do find occasional divergences, e.g. in the famous "Shiloh" passage in Genesis xlix. This is how the verse runs in the A.V. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver [R.V. the ruler's staff] from between his feet, until Shiloh come"—where Shiloh seems to be a personal name; but in the LXX we have this curious variant: "A ruler shall not fail from Judah, and a leader from his loins, until there come the things laid up in store for him." No mention here of Shiloh at all. The passage is one of extreme difficulty, and it has long puzzled scholars. For examples of verses added in the LXX we may examine Psalm xiv, which has three extra verses, as we know from Paul's Epistle to the Romans (for Paul habitually made use of the Septuagint, naturally enough, considering whom he was addressing). Some parts of the LXX are slavishly literal, so much so that it is no easy matter to understand precisely what the translators meant; other parts are, like the book of Job, little more than paraphrases of the original. N.T. quotations from the O.T. again and again follow the LXX version; and this is noticeable specially in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the authorship of which is unknown. And we may observe, in passing, that the Church Fathers are extremely fond of using the Septuagint, and that is simply because they knew no Hebrew. Jerome was, of course, a notable exception; he deliberately set himself to learn Hebrew, for he had no doubt that the Hebrew text was superior to the Greek version, and, where divergences occurred, he followed the Hebrew text, when he was busy with his translation of the Bible into Latin.

As I have already hinted, the LXX is written in Hellenistic Greek, the genus of which Alexandrian Greek is the species. It is a variety of the Greek spoken by the common people in Alexandria, and contains—naturally—a certain infusion of Semitic words and idioms, for it was intended to be a more or less literal version of the Hebrew

original. The translators felt bound to set down the Greek words which seemed the nearest equivalent of the Hebrew; hence, as we are informed, there is not infrequently a doubt whether the Greek *had* a meaning to those who wrote it down. Besides the peculiar difficulty of a word-for-word rendering of the Semitic original into a Greek version, there was this other difficulty: *ideas* which were familiar enough to a Hebrew were foreign to a Greek. The style is uneven; but this is due to the fact that different translators were at work, and the version was by no means done at the same epoch; and, apparently, there was no attempt made in after times to revise the translation as a whole, smooth away angularities, and secure uniformity.

The Septuagint managed to hold its own until after the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70; but in the second century the Jews, dissatisfied with the rendering that so long had served its purpose, turned to a new version by one Aquila, who made of the Hebrew a word-for-word construe—for it is this, rather than a translation. After Aquila, there appeared various revised editions of the LXX, i.e. those of *Theodotion* and *Symmachus*, but the greatest of these was Origen's, one of the few Gentiles who had an intimate acquaintance with Hebrew. Even then work on the LXX was not quite ended; later on Eusebius and others were busy with revision; most of these revised versions belong to the fourth century, and that is the period when our oldest (and best) MSS. were produced. It may be said, in a general way, that a goodly number of ancient versions of the O.T. (the Slavonic, for example) have their source in the LXX.

I have implied that the production of the LXX took a long time—say from the third to the first century B.C. There are differences in our MSS. of the LXX, but they are not so marked as those between the Greek and its Hebrew original. It may well be that the LXX has preserved a better text; but it would be rash to trust it too completely in matters of word and phrase, as the translators often misread or misconstrued the Hebrew. None the less, even its mistakes are often of considerable interest.

The use of the O.T. by the writers of the N.T. suggests problems not readily admitting of a solution. What about quotations in the N.T. that do not follow the LXX? These need not always be derived from the Hebrew, but through the medium of Aramaic versions current in the synagogues. Aramaic was a Semitic language, akin to Hebrew in some degree; and, being the language of the people in Palestine in the generations immediately preceding our Lord's days, it was used in these synagogues for an obvious reason: the common people were no longer familiar with their ancient language, Hebrew, which was the literary language and familiar only to the learned. Consequently, after a passage had been read out from the Hebrew during divine service, it was customary for some expert to come forward and render it in the popular dialect—the Aramaic. These Aramaic renderings finally got fixed in writing; and these written versions may quite conceivably have been used by some, at least, of the N.T. writers when making excerpts and quota-

tions from the O.T. Jesus Christ himself habitually, we may believe, spoke in Aramaic; indeed, we have some actual phrases of His embedded in our New Testaments, like "Ephphatha," all in Aramaic, and not the ancient Hebrew. When Paul addressed the crowds at Jerusalem, he is said in the "Acts" to have spoken to them in the *Hebrew* tongue; but note that this means *Aramaic*.

The number of LXX manuscripts is really considerable; the text does not depend on two or three, still less on a single MS. like some pagan writers of note. It will be understood that editors when they wish to present us with a good and readable text are met with many difficulties: they are obliged to choose between conflicting readings, and to do this requires skilled judgment, They are obliged to estimate the varying values of the manuscripts they consult: such is the main task of textual criticism. [For ordinary students, not interested in minute points of criticism, a text which gives us a good resultant of all the best MSS. is sufficient.] But it must not be forgotten that editorial difficulties are not at an end when they have settled a word here and a word there; sometimes it is found that the MSS. present a passage in a different order from the Hebrew; sometimes we find a different version of a section of some narrative. Let me give a few examples, despite the fact that this matter has already been touched on:

(1) Take the order of some of the commandments. This varies from the normal, as we understand it.

(2) In the Book of Proverbs some verses are omitted, but others inserted—which find no place in the authorised Hebrew text.

(3) Perhaps the text of Daniel exhibits the strangest of all the differences between the Hebrew and the Greek. In this book there are additions in the LXX which are completely absent in the Hebrew. If you look for these additions in your ordinary English Bibles, you will look in vain; but, if you wish to examine them, they may be found in the Apocrypha; and, when you have found them and read them, you will doubtless be glad that the old Jewish revisers improved the book by omitting these "additions." At the same time do not let us forget that among these additions was the piece known as the Song of the Three Holy Children, which, though absent from our Bibles, is to be found in the Prayer Book, and is known as the Benedicite.

I wish to stress once more the fact that the LXX translation of the Hebrew O.T. was not done at one time; it was a process extending over generations. Yet, for all that, the LXX *as a whole* is fairly of a piece throughout, written in the language *of* the people and *for* the people. And it may usefully be noted here that not a few expressions, words, turns of idiom, which half a century ago were confidently dubbed Semitisms or Hebraisms, have recently been found in documents not Biblical at all; in documents and even potsherds unearthed from the sands of Egypt, and evidently in common use—whatever their precise origin may have been. A very probable explanation of these so-called Semitisms is this: the *κοινή*, that is the Greek universally spoken in Alexandria and in general through-

out the Near East, must in course of time have been contaminated by Semitic influences. How could it be otherwise, when we remember that about a third of the population of Alexandria was Jewish? Besides, the traders, merchants, wandering scholars, pilgrims, and the rest, coming from Palestine, would be sure to import some words and idioms which, constantly reiterated, would soon become fashionable. We see the same sort of process going on in our own language. But the very fact of these Semitic importations into the Greek of the LXX would—or at least might—actually enhance its value in the eyes of Jewish readers; and it is not at all surprising that the Apostles used this Greek version almost as naturally as we use the A.V. of the Bible. The reaction of *later* Jews against the LXX may well be accounted for on the ground that they found this version continually appealed to by their hated opponents, the Christians.

We have already noted that the N.T. writers habitually used the LXX. Indeed, I think I am correct in stating that out of over 300 quotations from the O.T. in the N.T. most are derived from the Greek version. Not more than fifty differ materially from that version. But besides these direct quotations, there are a very large number of indirect verbal allusions. More than that: with some truth the LXX has been called the mother of the N.T., for without this Alexandrian rendering in the *κοινή* the language of the N.T. would have been very different from what it is. Therefore, adequately to understand the language of the N.T. some acquaintance with the LXX is obviously needed. And mark, too, how wide was the influence of this great translation in the spread of the Gospel. Jews who would assemble at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, whatever their language might be in the places where they lived, could all understand the "lingua franca," the *κοινή*, just as all ecclesiastics and scholars in the Middle Ages habitually used Latin as a common medium in which to express their thoughts. You might almost call the *κοινή* the Esperanto of its period. As these Jews gathered together they would hear, for the first time, the story of Jesus of Nazareth; and the Jewish Christians, speaking and preaching of His life and death on the Cross, would call to witness the prophetic words of the O.T. scriptures, believing that those scriptures pointed to Him, as the long-expected Messiah, to be a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of the people of Israel. And those testimonies to Jesus from the Torah and the Prophets would come to them—through what medium? In Hebrew? no; not even in Aramaic, for the Jews of the Dispersion were hardly acquainted with that dialect. Rather it would reach them in the words of the Septuagint. Perhaps Stephen, the proto-martyr, used that self-same version in his famous address to the Jews; and, years later, Ignatius at Antioch, Clement at Rome, Justin in Palestine, Irenæus at Lyons taught in the words of the LXX, and drew their quotations from its pages. Subsequently a yet wider range was given to the Septuagint, thanks to the Latin version made from it, for the use of Latin congregations in Italy and Africa; and later still we find it becoming the parent of many other versions.

I have previously alluded to the imperfections of the LXX. Well, there they are, without doubt; but do they detract from its value substantially? Not more, surely, than the errors in our own A.V. detract from its substantial value and accuracy. Probably no student of Scripture can read a chapter without some benefit. A few examples of its usefulness to the student might not be out of place. Take a well-known passage in the fourth chapter of Genesis, which runs thus in our A.V.: "And Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass when they were in the field together that Cain rose up against his brother and slew him." That sounds all right, till we learn that the word rendered "talked" is in the Hebrew "*said*," and regularly is used to introduce what a speaker wants to tell us; so that really the words should run, "And Cain said unto Abel his brother . . . and it came to pass that, when they were in the field," etc. This no longer sounds correct; obviously something has fallen out of the Hebrew, a fact which the A.V. manages to gloss over by turning "said unto" into "talked with." Now the LXX fills up the gap, and the words it supplies are just what we need to make good the sense of the passage. The words will now run thus: "And Cain said unto Abel his brother, Let us go into the field; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain slew his brother."

This is a passage, it is true, of no great importance; but the next one I shall quote is of very considerable importance, for it touches on a point of controversy between Christians and Jews. The passage comes in that extremely interesting and important Psalm xxii. (= LXX xxi.). Now the Hebrew text, as pointed, reads thus: "Many wild-dogs (i.e. fierce persecutors) have come against me; as a lion my hands and my feet; I may count all my bones." This does not give any sense, as it stands; a verb is required to govern the words "my hands and my feet." The Septuagint supplies it with "they pierced," and it is followed by the Vulgate and the Syriac versions. This gives at least the sense required. Another most interesting passage may well be taken notice of—from Job xix. Handel's setting of it in the *Messiah* has made it known to everybody who loves music, and its use in the opening sentences of the service for the Burial of the Dead in our Prayer Books has given it a sacred and touching character. Here are the words as they are familiar to so many mourners: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God." The LXX version is quite different; it runs thus: "I know that he is everliving who is destined to deliver me, and to raise up on the earth my skin which endures these sufferings; for these things have been accomplished for me by the Lord. These things I am conscious of in myself; mine eyes have seen them, and not another, but all have been fulfilled in my bosom." The idea here seems to be that of an Avenger, or Vindicator, who in the end will manifest himself after Job's death, and clear him finally from the unjust imputations which his friends have cast upon his good name. The

notion of a divine Redeemer is absent from the passage as the LXX translators understood it. These two verses are of notorious difficulty ; I make reference to them merely to show that the Septuagint gives an entirely different complexion to them from that with which we are familiar. I suppose that the actual Hebrew original has been so completely altered, or corrupted, that no final solution is possible. Further, by way of emphasising afresh the importance and value of the LXX, we must bear in mind that its language is the mould in which many of the thoughts and even many of the expressions of the Evangelists and of the Apostles were cast. Notice how terms of the Mosaic ritual were taken over from their O.T. setting, and given a new life and a wider application in the N.T. One example will do —*ὀσμὴ εὐωδίας*, a sweet-smelling savour—which occurs almost forty times in the Pentateuch, but there of literal offerings ; Paul employs it metaphorically. Such phrases as " believe in God," " faith towards God " you would certainly not find in ancient Greek authors, who probably wouldn't have understood them in any case ; but we who read them in the N.T. have only to examine the LXX to see how such terms were understood by readers of the Greek Testament, simply because they had been taken over from the Old, with which they were already familiar. An interesting case of the transfer of meaning in some given word is furnished by the Greek *βαπτίζω*, which in the N.T. is used exclusively of the Christian rite of baptism. The history of the word itself is not without importance, for neither the verb *βαπτίζω* or the nouns *βάπτισμα* or *βάπτισμος* were used, previous to N.T. times, in connection with religious rites. The verb = dip, or sink. But the Christians took the word over, and gave it a new—and sacramental—meaning. This is another case, then, where the employment of a word in the LXX was destined to influence not only Christian vocabulary but Christian doctrine. I might note in passing that in the Book of Revelation the phraseology of the LXX is constant, and some of the speeches in the Acts are full of its echoes.

The frequent citations of the LXX by the Greek Fathers, and of the Latin version of the LXX by the Latin Fathers, are a fairly good reason for studying the Septuagint. One example, to show that it is so, may not be amiss, for it is curious. St. Ambrose somewhere applies to Christ the appellation *scarabæus bonus*, which literally means " a good beetle." If we hadn't the LXX to refer to, such a phrase would surprise us, certainly, but we should be completely at a loss to know what it meant. But a reference to a passage in the second chapter of Habakkuk will give us the clue. In our English versions (A.V. and R.V.) we read : " The stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it," which is interpreted to mean that when the proud and grasping foeman (i.e. the Chaldæan) employs ill-gotten spoil for building his house, the very materials used will testify to the evil gain by which they were built. The stones and beams will cry aloud for vengeance on the blood shed in order to win that spoil. But in the LXX we find something different : for the second part of the verse, literally trans-

lated, runs thus: "the beetle out of the timber shall speak." The Latin Father refers this to Christ, who, like a beetle, called from the Cross (the timber), "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And St. Jerome says this: "Some say that it was a worm (*vermis*) speaking in the wood of the cross, which uttered these words in the 21st Psalm, 'I am become a worm and no man.'" Again, in the third chapter of Habakkuk we find in our versions, "Thou shalt revive thy work in the midst of the years." But the LXX give us this: "Thou shalt be recognised in the midst of two animals." Various curious inferences were drawn from this blunder: in the "two animals" Origen discovers the Son and the Spirit; Tertullian sees there the two figures of Moses and Elijah; others the two thieves; others again the two Testaments. The very mistakes of the LXX were employed by these Fathers—who knew no Hebrew—on which to embroider grotesque interpretations. Even the great Augustine had an idea that errors found in the LXX were, somehow or other, of divine origin.

I have already alluded to the great importance of the LXX from the fact it contains much valuable material not to be found in the O.T. Canon. This material we group together under the single name "Apocrypha." Among the books of the Apocrypha may be named the two Wisdom Books, viz. The Book of Wisdom, and what is known as Ecclesiasticus; but the most important in some ways is the First Book of the Maccabees, which tells the story of the great revolt which took place in Palestine in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes (second century B.C.). This was really the heroic age of Jewish nationalism, and we cannot but feel moved as we read how the aged Mattathias and his sons fought for, and won, their independence when it was threatened by the cruelty and tyranny of Antiochus. One at least of the Psalms gives us a pathetic picture of the desolation of the Sanctuary in those days, before the great victory enabled Judas and his followers to repair the ravage and bring about an era of prosperity. There is little doubt that the Book of Daniel was written during that heroic epoch. But it may be as well to caution those who are not too familiar with these matters not to confuse the Apocrypha with the Apocalyptic literature that was destined to leave so deep a mark on many a passage in the N.T. Of all that apocalyptic literature, with its somewhat vague and grandiose pictures of the Last Things, the N.T. contains one complete specimen—the Apocalypse itself, in which earlier material is set in a Christian framework. The Apocalyptists, despite their vagueness, their inconsistency, and their frequent absurdities, cannot be overlooked; they profoundly influenced the thought of the age immediately preceding the days of Jesus. They laid stress on the transcendental character of the Messiah, for one thing; for another they asserted the immortality of the soul, and the doctrine of a bodily resurrection. The importance of the individual, too, was stressed; previously the nation had been the unit of interest; and they were eager to include the Gentiles in the divine plan of salvation, instead of limiting it to the Jews.

We have seen that the books of the O.T. as finally settled by the Jewish Canonists, are those that we find in our own English A.V. and in the R.V. To some books, Daniel and Esther, additions were made in the LXX, but were not accepted by the Palestinian Jews.

Besides these books—canonical, as we term them—others were brought into the Alexandrian Greek version: these form the Apocrypha, the surplusage from the Hebrew O.T. Outside the limits of Palestine, Christianity was spread by Greek-speaking Jews who had embraced the new Messianic faith; and their converts—Jews and Gentiles—speaking Greek, naturally took the Alexandrian version of the O.T. as their authority. The same sort of infallibility which was ascribed to the Hebrew Scriptures was held to attach to the version of the LXX. And, in their desire not to leave any possible divine utterance out of their collection, they gathered up many other books without inquiring too rigidly whether the orthodox canonists included them in their sacred Scriptures or not. Only when sharp controversies at a later period showed Christian apologists that the Jews refused to acknowledge the authority of these books from which (as from an arsenal) opponents drew weapons with which mightily to confute their Jewish opponents, did it become necessary to draw up a list of books universally accepted as of divine origin. The oldest of these lists was made toward the end of the second century A.D. It was natural that the Latin Church, receiving the Bible from the Greeks, included in its versions what the synagogue rejected. It was not till the fifth century that Jerome, the greatest scholar of his time, was persuaded by the Bishop of Rome to undertake a new Latin version to take the place of the older translations. This version, known as the Vulgate, was derived not from the LXX but direct from the Hebrew. As a critic, Jerome would relegate all the surplusage of the LXX to the Apocrypha; but he was unable or unwilling to display consistency. The result was that these Apocryphal books came to form part of the Vulgate itself, though he never regarded them as possessing the supreme authority of the books in the Hebrew canon. Inconsistent this, perhaps; but at least it was a triumph for the LXX. And so it came to pass that, in the middle of the sixteenth century, in opposition to the Protestant contention that the canon of the O.T. should be limited to the books contained in the Hebrew Bible, the Roman Church decided at the Council of Trent that the deutero-canonical books should form an integral part of the Bible to be accepted by all faithful members of the Roman Catholic communion. "If," said the Tridentine fathers, "any man does not accept as sacred and canonical these books as contained in the ancient Latin edition [i.e. the Vulgate], let him be anathema."

Of recent years there has been a remarkable revival of interest in LXX study. Indeed, the literature that has gathered round that version which, for half a millennium, was dominant in the Græco-Roman world, is enormous. What it shows is that the Septuagint is no dead record but a living testimony.