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THE QUOTATIONS IN HEBREWS 1:5-13

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A Thesis Presented to the Faculty  
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,  
Department of Exegetical Theology  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Sacred Theology

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by

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The subject of this study is the Old Testament quotations found in the first chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews. These are seven in number.

This is not an exegetical study. Space does not permit a thorough investigation of such questions as: "When was the Son begotten?" or, "Who are the *μετόχους* of Psalm 45?" or, "What advent is referred to in the preface to the third quotation?" In this investigation we plan rather to compare the text of these quotations with the Septuagint from which they were extracted to ascertain, if possible, what Septuagint manuscript the author had at his disposal and also to consider the messianic implication of these quotations.

The first chapter will serve as an introduction to this study inasmuch as it deals both with the author's general use of the Old Testament throughout his epistle and with some general remarks about the series of quotations in the first chapter. The second chapter will be devoted to an examination of the text of the quotations in relation to its corresponding Old Testament passage, while the third will deal with the question: "From what Septuagint manuscript did the author extract his quotations?" In the fourth chapter we will raise such questions as: "In what sense are these Old Testament passages quoted in Hebrews 1 messianic?" or, "How may these passages be used to serve the purpose of the author of Hebrews?" The concluding chapter will summarize the important find-

ings of this study.

The quotations in English are uniformly made from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, 1952. All references to chapter and verse are also made from this translation. The Greek text of the quotations is taken from the twenty-third edition of Nestle's Greek New Testament.

## CHAPTER II

### GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

This chapter will be devoted to some general remarks first on the author's use of the Old Testament throughout his epistle and secondly on the quotations in his first chapter. Under the general heading of the author's use of the Old Testament will be considered both what he quotes and how he quotes it.

The Old Testament quotations in Hebrews are uniformly taken from the Septuagint. Our author repeatedly follows the Septuagint without making any attempt to bring it into harmony with the Hebrew text. He, therefore, does not proceed as Paul and other New Testament writers, who do occasionally attempt to return to the Masoretic reading.<sup>1</sup> Examples of this peculiarity in Hebrews are numerous. In Heb. 1:6, for example, our author followed a Septuagint gloss of Deut. 32:43. In Heb. 2:7 he followed the *ἀγγελος* reading of the Septuagint instead of the *אֱלֹהִים* of the Masoretic text. Again, in Heb. 10:5 he reads "a body hast thou prepared for me" with the Septuagint against the Hebrew "thou hast given me an open ear." In Heb. 10:38 the Septuagint has "if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him" instead of the Masoretic reading "behold his soul is lifted up, it is not upright in him." And in Heb. 12:6 the Septuagint reading "and chastises every son whom he receives" is quoted

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<sup>1</sup>Patrick Fairbairn, The Typology of Scripture (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1911), p. 394.

rather than the Hebrew reading "as a father the son in whom he delights." In all these cases the Masoretic text is completely ignored in favor of the Septuagint version.

It would seem, then, that our author regarded the Septuagint as authoritative as the original Hebrew text. He believed that God's voice could be heard as clearly in the Greek text as in the Hebrew. We need not conclude from this fact, however, that the author of Hebrews regarded the Septuagint as being superior to the original because his concern in these quotations was primarily their practical message and not their critical problems. He was not addressing himself to learned critics who might have been interested in comparing the popular version of that time with the unfamiliar Hebrew text, but to the common people for whom the Septuagint was the basis for worship. So, then, our author did not regard himself under obligation to correct the poor readings in the Septuagint. At the same time he was not minded to exploit its inaccuracies. The thought comparable to the Septuagint gloss of Deut. 32:43, for example, is found in the Masoretic text of Ps. 97:7. Again, he perhaps chose the reading "angels" in Ps. 8:5 because the angels, who are the creatures nearest to God, best answered the idea suggested in the term "elohim." Furthermore, the stress of his quotation from Ps. 40:6-8 lies in the readiness of the speaker to do the will of God and not in the Septuagint reading that a body had been prepared for this speaker to enable him to accomplish this task of obedience. Again, the Septuagint rendering of Hab. 2:4 is not so much a discordant sense of the Masoretic reading as a different expression of it. When the Hebrew prophet speaks of the puffed-up soul (behold his soul is lifted up), he only "expresses



more generally what is more fully and specifically intimated by the apostle, when he speaks of such as draw back in times of trial, and incur thereby the displeasure of God."<sup>2</sup> And, finally, the thrust of our author's quotation from Proverbs (Prov. 3:11f. quoted in Heb. 12:5,6) is brought out by the Hebrew reading as well as by the Septuagint. In all of these instances our author laid emphasis on the general import of the passage quoted rather than on the words themselves. It is clear, then, that the author of Hebrews, though he did use the Septuagint as an authoritative text, did not take the liberty of basing any argument or doctrine on the Septuagint changes from the Hebrew nor was he concerned with correcting any of the Septuagint deficiencies.<sup>3</sup>

The author's use of the Septuagint shows us what our attitude towards Scripture should be. This attitude may be summed up in the words of P. Fairbairn.

We must contend for every jot and tittle of the word, when the adversary seeks, by encroaching on these, to impair or corrupt the truth of God, . . . [but] where it is enough to obtain the general import, . . . [we must] avoid the errors of superstitious Jews and learned pedants, and be more anxious to imbibe the spirit of Scripture. . . . Correctness without scrupulosity should be the rule here.<sup>4</sup>

Concerning the author's choice of passages quoted from the Old Testament, it may be stated that of thirty-two direct quotations, fourteen are from the Pentateuch, eleven from the Psalms, one from 2 Samuel, two

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>This is also the conclusion of Franklin Johnson, The Quotations of the New Testament from the Old (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1896), pp. 18-20.

<sup>4</sup>Fairbairn, op. cit., p. 395.

from Isaiah, and one each from Jeremiah, Haggai, Habakkuk, and Proverbs. If Swete<sup>5</sup> speaks of only twenty-nine direct quotations, it is because he does not include the quotations from Gen. 47:31 in Heb. 11:21, from Deut. 9:19 in Heb. 12:21, and from Is. 26:20 in Heb. 10:37a. And if Spicq<sup>6</sup> speaks of as many as thirty-six direct quotations, it is because he includes in his list the second time that Jer. 31:33f., Ps. 2:7, Ps. 110:1, and Ps. 110:4 are quoted in Hebrews.

The following points may be noted from this statistic.

- a. The quotations in Hebrews are primarily from the Pentateuch and the Psalms.
- b. There is a striking poverty of quotations from the prophets and historical books.
- c. There are no quotations from the apocryphal books although Heb. 11:35 does allude to 2 Macc. 6:18-7:42, and Heb. 11:37 seems to allude to the Ascension of Isaiah (5:11-14).
- d. Of the thirty-two direct quotations, twenty-four are peculiar to Hebrews. The eight which are quoted elsewhere in the New Testament are: Ps. 2:7, 2 Sam. 7:14, Deut. 32:35, Ps. 110:1, Ps. 8:5ff., Ex. 25:40, Hab. 2:3f., Gen. 23:12.
- e. The author's doctrine of the person and work of Christ is supported almost exclusively by quotations from the Psalms. Perhaps this peculiarity is due to the common use of the Psalter in Jewish worship, as a result of which Jewish Christians became more familiar with the Psalms than with other portions of the Old Testament.

Having asked: "From where were the quotations in Hebrews taken?" we may next inquire: "What authority did the author attach to the Old Testament?" A glance at the formulas of citation in Hebrews is enough to

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<sup>5</sup>Brooke Foss Westcott, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), p. 473.

<sup>6</sup>C. Spicq, L'Épître aux Hébreux (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1953), I, 331.

show that the author of Hebrews considered the whole Old Testament to be the Word of God. He never mentions the name of the Old Testament writer whom he cites, but always refers his quotation to God Himself. The only possible exception might be ἐν Δαυὶδ λέγων of Heb. 4:7, but even this instance seems only an apparent exception since the phrase refers less to the psalmist as a person than to the Psalter as a collection. It is an expression parallel to the ἐν Ἁγίᾳ τί λέγουσιν ἡ γραφή of Rom. 11:2 where the human author is merely the instrument through whom, in this case, the Scriptures are speaking. The author's lack of interest in the human authors of the Old Testament is further shown by the vague formula of Heb. 2:6 πού τις λέγων. His concern for its divine authorship appears in the numerous instances in which God is specifically said to be the Speaker. Sometimes the Holy Spirit is the Speaker (Heb. 3:7; 9:8; 10:15); twice Christ speaks (2:11-13; 10:5); but most often it is God the Father who is the Speaker (1:5-13; 3:15; 4:3,4; 5:5; 7:17; 13:5).

The divine authority of the Old Testament appears not only in the formulas of citation, but also in the way in which our author elaborates his doctrines from the Old Testament. Our author finds all the elements of his Christology and new covenant theology in the Old Testament. He presents Christ as the Son of God (Ps. 2:7 and 2 Sam. 7:14), the Divine King (Ps. 45:6,7), the Eternal Creator (Ps. 102:25-27), the participant in flesh and blood (Ps. 8:5-7 and Is. 8:17-18), the one called a priest according to the order of Melchizedek (Gen. 14:17-20 and Ps. 110:4), and the one who was exalted to God's right hand (Ps. 110:1). The author shows that Jesus has become the mediator of the new covenant in which sins are abolished (Jer. 31:31-34) by His obedience in offering up His

body (Ps. 40:7-9), and that He thus entered into the heavenly sanctuary (Ex. 25:40).

Besides being the authoritative Word of God, the Old Testament is also the living Word of God. Because it is alive, its message is not restricted to one generation but remains the same for each succeeding generation. For example, the Holy Spirit exhorts the Christians of the first century (Heb. 3:7-11) in the same terms in which He exhorted the Israelites in the wilderness and the generation of David (Ps. 95:7-11). Moreover, the Old Testament now speaks to the "new" Israel about the new covenant in the person of the "new" Moses, the "new" Joshua, and the "new" Priest-King. Because the Old Testament is alive, it is also a personal and present revelation of God. This explains why the author introduces Old Testament passages not with *γράφεται* but with words denoting "speaking" (often in the present tense) such as *λέγων* (2:6,12; 9:20; 10:8; 12:26), *λέγει* (1:6,7; 3:7; 5:6; 8:8; 10:5), *λέγεσθαί* (3:15), *λέγοντος* (7:21), *δια λέγεται* (12:5), *φήσιν* (8:5), *εἶπέν* (1:5), *τὸν εἰπόντα* (10:30), and *εἶρηκεν* (1:13).

Another point of interest. Usually the author is satisfied to quote only one Old Testament passage. But in Heb. 1:5-13 he gathers together many quotations for the purpose of reinforcing his argument, in accordance with the rabbinic procedure of exegesis known as the Charaz, which literally means to string beads to make a necklace.<sup>7</sup> On another occasion he interprets one quotation by another, as in Heb. 4:4 where Gen. 2:2 contains the meaning of Ps. 95:11. Sometimes he divides a

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 333.

single quotation into two parts and reunites them by *καὶ* (1:8; 10:16,17) or by *καὶ πάλιν* (2:13a and 13b) if the text provides a double proof. Or, conversely, he combines into one quotation texts taken from different books, as in Heb. 10:37,38 which is a collation of Is. 26:20 and Hab. 2:3,4.

Since the author is interested in the Messianic sense of the Old Testament, it is not surprising to find that he often adds comments to his quotations (2:6-9; 10:8-10; 12:27), perhaps only a single word (10:39) or a longer statement (7:1-10,11-28). Heb. 3:7-11 is a good example of his method. First he cites the text of his quotation; then he points up its original significance, fastens on to its key words (*σήμερον, κατάπαυσις*), substitutes a more precise equivalent (*σαββατισμὸς*), and, finally, applies the text to his readers. He often builds his case around a few key words appearing in lengthy quotations. From Ps. 8:5-7 he selects *ὑποτάξαι* (2:8) and *φαχύτι* (2:9), from Ps. 22:23, *ἀδελφῶν* (2:12), from Is. 8:17, *πεπορευθῶς* (2:13), from Is. 8:18, *τὰ παλδία* (2:13), from Ps. 95:7-11, *σήμερον* and *σκληρυνθῆ* (3:13), from Ex. 25:40, *τύπος* (8:5), from Jer. 31:31-34, *καλυή* (8:13), from Ps. 40:7-9, *θέλημα* and *σῶμα* (10:5), and from Hab. 2:3, *ὑποστολῆς* and *πίστεως* (10:39). Sometimes he extracts the fullest possible meaning of the Old Testament quotation by focusing successively on all the important words in the text, as in the quotation of Ps. 110:4 where he discovers: (a) That God called Christ to the office of priesthood (5:5-10); (b) That God did so with an oath (7:20,21); (c) That God called Him to the Melchizedekian priesthood (6:20f.) which is an eternal priesthood (7:16,17). In the words of R. M. Grant, "where

[Paul] writes with frequent offhand allusions to numerous verses of Scripture which he recalls from memory, the author of Hebrews rigorously revolves a few selected texts and examines their reciprocal relations."<sup>8</sup>

Grant thus implies that our author's quotations from the Old Testament were not made from memory as were Paul's. This raises an important question. Did he quote from memory, as Swete<sup>9</sup> and Lueker<sup>10</sup> maintain, or did he copy accurately from some Greek manuscript which we no longer possess, as suggested by Hatch,<sup>11</sup> Padva<sup>12</sup> and Spicq?<sup>13</sup>

A general survey of the thirty-two quotations from the Old Testament reveals that these quotations are for the most part in general agreement with the Septuagint tradition. Six are exact quotations (1:5a from Ps. 2:7; 1:5b from 2 Sam. 7:14; 1:7 from Ps. 104:4; 1:13 from Ps. 110:1; 11:18 from Gen. 21:12; 13:6 from Ps. 118:6). Four others are almost exact quotations (2:13 from Is. 8:17,18 except for a change of the position of  $\epsilon\sigma\sigma\mu\alpha\iota$  and the omission of  $\delta\gamma\omega$ ; 5:6 from Ps. 110:4 except for the omission of  $\epsilon\bar{\iota}$ ; 11:21 from Gen. 47:31 except for the omis-

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<sup>8</sup>Robert M. Grant, The Bible in the Church (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1954), p. 36.

<sup>9</sup>Henry Barclay Swete, An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek (Cambridge: University Press, 1902), p. 402.

<sup>10</sup>E. L. Lueker, "The Author of Hebrews: A Fresh Approach," Concordia Theological Monthly, XVII (July, 1946), 502.

<sup>11</sup>Edwin Hatch, Essays in Biblical Greek (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1889), pp. 203-204.

<sup>12</sup>Spicq, op. cit., I, 334, citing P. Padva, Les citations de l'Ancien Testament dans l'épître aux Hébreux (Paris: n.p., 1904), p. 101.

<sup>13</sup>Spicq, op. cit., I, 334.

sion of *Ἰσραήλ*; 12:5,6 from Prov. 3:11,12 except for the addition of *μου*). Fourteen other quotations present slight modifications of the Septuagint, consisting in differences of words and their forms, in additions and omissions, and in transpositions (1:6; 1:8,9; 1:10-12; 2:6-8, 12; 3:7-11; 4:4; 6:13,14; 8:5,8-12; 9:20; 10:5-10,37b; 13:5). Six more may be called free paraphrases in the sense that the author of Hebrews recasts words of the Septuagint into a differently constructed sentence (3:2 from Num. 12:7; 7:1,2 from Gen. 14:17,18,20; 10:30 from Deut. 32:35,36; 12:20 from Ex. 19:13; 12:26 from Hag. 2:6; 12:29 from Deut. 4:24). The two remaining quotations consist of short phrases taken exactly from the Septuagint and placed into a new sentence (10:37a from Is. 26:20; 12:21 from Deut. 9:19). This survey suggests that the majority of quotations in this epistle faithfully reproduce some Septuagint manuscript. This is corroborated by the fact that many of these quotations reproduce lengthy texts of the Old Testament. In fact, the longest quotation in the New Testament, which is found in this epistle (8:8-12), reproduces the Septuagint with only slight modifications. Our author's close adherence to the Septuagint is evident also from his use of Ps. 110:1. When he formally quotes it, he gives the exact reading of the Septuagint *ἐκ δεξιῶν* (1:13); but when he merely alludes to this verse, he uniformly renders it more freely with *ἐν δεξιᾷ* (1:3; 8:1; 10:12,13; 12:2). Other arguments in favor of the above view are advanced by Padva.<sup>14</sup> He maintains that if the quotations in Hebrews had been made from memory, one would have expected a more limited vocabulary and a simplified

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<sup>14</sup>Spicq, *op. cit.*, I, 334, citing Padva, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

style. But, he maintains, this is not the case. For example, words not found in his vocabulary elsewhere are found in these quotations (ὅτι in the sense of "for," 8:10; ἐπιλαβόμενός μου, 8:9; εἰς πατέρα, 1:5; Κοπή in the sense of "defeat," 7:1). Also, in one instance he employs several different terms in place of the Septuagint word (he renders διατίθημι with συντελέω and ποιέω in 8:8,9). It would seem, then, that the author closely followed a Septuagint manuscript. The observation of Lueker<sup>15</sup> that a Jew could without too much difficulty quote from memory lengthy passages from the Old Testament because of his early training in memorization seems not sufficient to overthrow the above evidence which favors studied care to reproduce Old Testament passages accurately.

On the other hand, one may not deny that the author allows himself a certain degree of freedom in citing the Old Testament. The quotation from Jeremiah 31 in Heb. 8:8-12 and Heb. 10:16,17 is an instructive example. When our author quotes Jeremiah in chapter eight, he reproduces the correct order of the words (διδούς νόμους μου εἰς τὴν διάνοιαν αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐπὶ καρδίας αὐτῶν ἐπιγράψω αὐτούς). But the second time he quotes this passage (10:16), he freely inverts two phrases (διδούς νόμους μου ἐπὶ καρδίας αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐπὶ τῆν διάνοιαν αὐτῶν ἐπιγράψω αὐτούς). This example shows us that, although our author is concerned with giving an exact rendering of the Septuagint, he does at times content himself with a freer rendition of the original text. Furthermore, the six examples given above<sup>16</sup> of a free rendering

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<sup>15</sup>Lueker, "The Author of Hebrews: A Fresh Approach," op. cit. p. 502.

<sup>16</sup>Supra, p. 11.



of the Old Testament are hardly due to readings from a manuscript which we no longer possess. They rather seem like paraphrases of Old Testament passages. Our author in the above instances takes the actual words of the Septuagint, but reconstructs their sequence.

Let it be granted, then, that our author was concerned with reproducing accurately the passages which he quotes from the Old Testament, not as a textual critic but as a pastor who at times quotes more freely to suit his own purpose. The question still remains: "How are the minor deviations in those quotations which on the whole conform to the Septuagint to be explained?" "Are they indicative of a manuscript which we no longer possess, or are they intentional or unintentional changes made by the author?" Some, it seems, may be the result of the author's adaptation of the Septuagint to his context. In quoting Ps. 8:5-7 (Heb. 2: 6-8) he does not include the statement *καὶ κατέστασας αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὰ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου*. In Heb. 10:37b he inverts the two lines in Hab. 2:3,4 (*ἔὰν ὑποστείλῃται, οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἢ ψυχὴ μου ἐν αὐτῷ. ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως μου ῥήσεται*). In Heb. 6:13,14 he adapts the Gen. 22:16,17 reading of *κατ' ἑμαυτοῦ ὕμνος. . . ἤμην. . . τὸ σπέρμα σου το ὕμνησεν καθ' ἑαυτοῦ. . . εἰμην. . . σε*. In the quotation from Jer. 31:31-34 in Heb. 8:8-12 he three times substitutes for *φησὶν* the more usual *λέγει*. In Heb. 9:20 he adapts to his context the words of Ex. 24:8 by substituting *τοῦτο* for *ἰδοῦ*. But other quotations very likely represent different manuscript readings. In Heb. 2:12 a word not found elsewhere in the epistle is used to render the Septuagint *διηγήσομαι*, which is used by our author in Heb. 11:32. The difference between the *ἐν δοκιμασίᾳ* of

Heb. 3:9 and the  $\epsilon\delta\omicron\kappa\iota\mu\alpha\sigma\alpha\nu$  of the Septuagint probably arose from the confusion in the uncials between  $\bar{\epsilon}\Delta\omicron\kappa\iota\mu\alpha\sigma\iota\delta$  and  $\epsilon\Delta\omicron\kappa\iota\mu\alpha\sigma\bar{\alpha}$ . The quotation in Heb. 10:30 was probably a stock quotation current in this form since it is identical with those found in Rom. 12:19 and the Targum Onkelos.<sup>17</sup> It is possible also that Heb. 13:5 was taken from a written source.<sup>18</sup> It is likely, then, that our author extracted his quotations from a manuscript which has not been preserved for us. However, this manuscript could not have been far removed from the Septuagint tradition as reflected in our present manuscripts because the differences between the quotations in Hebrews and our present Septuagint manuscripts, other than those attributed above to our author, are numerically few. Thus, if it must be admitted that we no longer possess the exact Septuagint text used by the author of Hebrews, we may nonetheless agree with the words of Westcott that "the text of the quotations agrees in the main with some form of the present text of the LXX."<sup>19</sup>

From these general considerations on the use of the Old Testament in Hebrews we now consider in particular the seven Old Testament quotations of the first chapter of this epistle.

Most New Testament writers quote from the Old Testament for apologetic reasons. Their quotations are to prove the truth of their assertions. But the purpose of the quotations in Hebrews and more particularly in the first chapter is quite different. Our author is not

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<sup>17</sup>Spicq, op. cit., I, 336 and Westcott, op. cit., p. 477.

<sup>18</sup>Spicq, op. cit., I, 336 and Westcott, op. cit., p. 477.

<sup>19</sup>Westcott, op. cit., p. 476.

primarily concerned with guaranteeing the truth of his Christology by references to the Old Testament because his readers, who already believed that Jesus was the Messiah, were in no need of such proofs. His motive for quoting the Old Testament was rather to discover there the full and glorious teaching regarding the Messiah so that his readers who were on the brink of apostasy might once again be drawn back to the full assurance of their faith. In other words, he consults the Old Testament to find there the source of his doctrine of Christ and not the proof of it. He shows in chapter one that to believe in Jesus Christ is to realize that Jesus is the worshipped Son, the God-King, the eternal Lord and Creator, the Victor, and, later on in chapter five, the eternal Priest. Having such a Messiah, how could the Hebrews neglect the salvation which He proclaimed? This use of the Old Testament presupposes the principle that the New Testament faith can be fully understood only in the light of the Old Testament revelation. Our author knows that once the evangelical message has been accepted, its more complete meaning must be found in a study of the Old Testament. Thus, the originality of our author's use of the Old Testament especially in chapter one, consists in his expounding the meaning of the New Testament faith from the message of the Old Testament.

As was said before, these seven quotations form an amalgam of texts. The question may be raised: "What do these passages have in common with each other?" The first three do expressly speak of the Son, but the rest do not. What is their unifying factor? Synge<sup>20</sup> answers this ques-

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<sup>20</sup>Francis Charles Synge, Hebrews and the Scriptures (London: S.P.C.K., 1959), pp. 1-9.

tion quite satisfactorily. He shows the common factor in these seven texts to be "that all the passages represent God as speaking to, or speaking of, a Someone, a Someone who shares Heaven with Him."<sup>21</sup> Synge calls this Someone the Heavenly Companion. In Ps. 2:7 and 2 Sam. 7:14 God speaks to this Heavenly Companion and calls Him His Son. God is still the Speaker of the words in the third quotation which is from Deut. 32:43. Here God bears witness to this Heavenly Companion who is worthy to be worshipped by the angels. In Ps. 45:6,7 God addresses this Heavenly Companion as the divine King. Ps. 102:25-27 is also spoken by God, this time to the Eternal Lord and Creator. And, finally, in Ps. 110:1 God declares this Heavenly Companion to be the Victor exalted to His right hand. All these quotations are spoken by God to His Heavenly Companion.

It may at first seem strange that this Heavenly Companion is compared to the angels. Why, it may be inquired, did our author stress this comparison, which embraces as many as twenty-six verses (1:4-14; 2:1-9,16), so heavily? Four different reasons have been adduced.

Not infrequently the argument of Heb. 1:4-13 is said to run as follows: "Christ is greater than the angels and is therefore God."<sup>22</sup> This argument is based on the correct view that the angels, of all the creatures of God, occupy the most elevated rank in being nearest to God.<sup>23</sup> They live in the super-earthly world, were present at the creation of

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>23</sup>The evidence for this understanding of the angels is given by Spicq, op. cit., II, 50.

the world, and participate in its preservation and government. Because of their close proximity to God, they are in a very special sense called the "sons of God" (Job 1:6; 38:7). But, this argument erroneously assumes that the author quotes these Old Testament passages to prove the deity of Christ to those who did not yet believe it. We noted earlier that these quotations rather show the glorious implications of the faith which was already theirs. We need also to note that the author made such a demonstration quite irrelevant through his portrayal of Christ as the image and substance of the glory of God (1:3).

Synge supposes that the angels are here introduced because they presented a special problem to his Heavenly Companion theme. He maintains that our author, in pursuit of his purpose to disclose the full force of the readers' belief in Jesus the Messiah, was constrained to show that Jesus Christ was not merely an angel but greater than the angels. In his words, "the author is engaged in demonstrating from Scripture that not an angel but none other than the Heavenly Companion was made flesh in Jesus. Not an angel but the Word made flesh was born in Palestine."<sup>24</sup> But this interpretation assumes that in the minds of his readers the Messiah was thought to be only an angel. Spicq gives some evidence from the Scriptures and the Jewish writings that the Messiah was actually called an angel, but he correctly concludes that He was so called "moins pour désigner sa nature que son rôle d'envoyé du Père."<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Synge, op. cit., p. 15.

<sup>25</sup>Spicq, op. cit., II, 52.

Moreover, the additional observation of Westcott that "the superiority of Messiah to the angels is recognized in Rabbinic writings"<sup>26</sup> and the lack of evidence in the rest of Hebrews for the alleged misunderstanding on the part of the readers of Hebrews make Synge's view very improbable.

It has also been alleged that our author mentioned the angels in his first chapter because he was dealing either with the same error that Paul was contending with at Colossae, namely, the error of angel worship, or with the pagan error of worshipping the stars which were associated with the angels.<sup>27</sup> In Hebrews, however, there is no hint that his readers had fallen into either of these two errors.

× The context of Hebrews 1 suggests rather that the point of comparison between Christ and the angels lies in the fact that both were revealers of the Word of God. Just as the angels were God's spokesmen at the giving of the law at Sinai, so Christ was the prophet of God proclaiming God's final salvation (2:1-4). But the comparison is made not merely to demonstrate the superiority of Christ over the angels as such, but also to stress, by way of consequence, the superiority of Christ's message over the angels' message. Thus, the argument of the first chapter may be summed up as follows. The law is to the gospel what the angels are to Christ. If Christ is far superior to the angelic messengers, then the word of salvation announced by Him is also more important than the message declared by the angels. Therefore, it is the obliga-

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<sup>26</sup>Westcott, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>27</sup>William Manson, The Epistle to the Hebrews: an Historical and Theological Reconsideration (London: Hodder & Stoughton Ltd., 1951), pp. 49-50.

tion of the Hebrews to give more earnest heed to the gospel than did the Israelites to the law.<sup>28</sup>

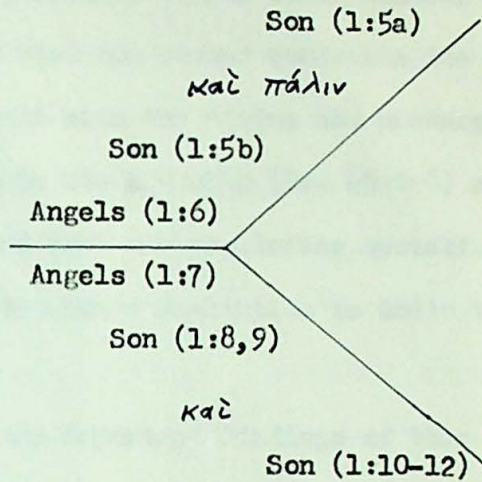
The final inquiry in this chapter concerns the literary structure and the order of thought of these seven quotations. Delitzsch<sup>29</sup> divides them into three contrasts. The first is indicated by the  $\delta\epsilon$  (1:6) answering to the  $\eta\acute{\alpha}\rho$  (1:5); the second by the  $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu. . . \delta\epsilon$  (1:7 and 1:8); and the third by the  $\delta\epsilon$  (1:13). The second contrast, it may be noted in support of Delitzsch, is further set apart from the first and third by the parallel expression  $\pi\rho\acute{o}\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma \acute{\alpha}\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$  (1:7) and  $\pi\rho\acute{o}\varsigma \tau\acute{\omicron}\nu \nu\acute{\iota}\acute{\omicron}\nu$  (1:8). It seems preferable, however, to speak of two contrasts and a conclusion because verse thirteen has more elements of a climactic conclusion than of a third contrast. For example, the  $\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omicron\mu\kappa\epsilon\nu$  (that which was spoken once and incorporated into Scripture but still has a continuing effect, 1:13) well sums up the  $\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\pi\omicron\nu$  of 1:5a (that which was once spoken in the past) and the  $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\iota$  of 1:6 (that which is an abiding utterance applicable for all times). Also, the final  $\pi\rho\acute{o}\varsigma \tau\acute{\iota}\nu\alpha \tau\acute{\omega}\nu \acute{\alpha}\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omicron\upsilon\varsigma \acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omicron\mu\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\nu \pi\omicron\tau\epsilon$  (1:13) is a fitting conclusion because it is a reply to the opening  $\tau\acute{\iota}\nu\iota \acute{\epsilon}\lambda\pi\acute{\epsilon}\nu \pi\omicron\tau\epsilon \tau\acute{\omega}\nu \acute{\alpha}\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$  (1:5a). Furthermore, the thought of Ps. 110:1 of the Victori-

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<sup>28</sup>Those interested in studying the Biblical and Jewish traditions concerning the angels as messengers and word-bearers of God will gain much from Spicq's excellent article. See Spicq, *op. cit.*, II, 50-61. Suffice it to say here that this doctrine is reflected both in Acts 7:53 where Stephen in addressing the Jews says: "You who received the law as delivered by angels" and in Gal. 3:19 where Paul states that the law was "ordained by angels through an intermediary."

<sup>29</sup>Franz Delitzsch, Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, translated from the German by Thomas L. Kingsbury (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952), I, 85.

ous Son sitting at the right hand of God recapitulates the teaching of the previous quotations. These two contrasts form a chiasmic structure which may be outlined as follows:



The order of thought of these texts can best be understood in the light of their literary structure. Lünemann's division of these quotations into those which prove that Christ has inherited a more excellent name than the angels (v. 5) and those which prove that Christ is better than the angels (vv. 6-14)<sup>30</sup> overlooks the literary structure of the entire section and therefore seems arbitrary. More interesting but still doubtful is the suggestion of Synge<sup>31</sup> that the first four quotations are fulfilled at the incarnation of Christ, the fifth (Ps. 45:6-8) in His life and conduct, the sixth (Ps. 102:25-27) in His resurrection and victory over death and finitude, and the last, in His exaltation at the

<sup>30</sup>Göttlieb Lünemann, Critical and Exegetical Hand-book to the Epistle to the Hebrews, in Meyer's Critical and Exegetical Hand-book to the New Testament (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1885), p. 401.

<sup>31</sup>Synge, op. cit., p. 5.



ascension. Perhaps it is best to say that the first set of verses contrasts the Son and the worshipping angels by referring first to the foundation of Christ's Sonship (Ps. 2:7), then to its continuance (2 Sam. 7:14), and, lastly, to its final manifestation at the Parousia (Deut. 32:43); and that the second contrasts the creaturely and changing service of the angels with the divine and unchanging sovereignty of the Son, revealed both in His Kingship (Ps. 45:6-8) and Creatorship (Ps. 102:25-27); and that the concluding quotation climaxes these contrasts by showing the Son's exaltation to God's very presence over all of His enemies.

We summarize the important findings of this chapter. The quotations in this epistle are taken exclusively from the Septuagint and more particularly from the Septuagint of the Pentateuch and of the Psalms. In general they were taken exactly from some Septuagint manuscript which must have been very closely related to our present Septuagint manuscripts. Our author quotes Old Testament passages as God's living Word. He expounds their Messianic sense less for the purpose of proving that Jesus was the Messiah as for articulating the deep implications of this already accepted belief. The comparison between Christ and the angels was introduced because the angels were known to have had a part in the giving of the law at Mt. Sinai. The seven quotations of the first chapter are arranged in two contrasts of three quotations each, followed by a conclusion.

## CHAPTER III

### THE TEXTS

In this chapter we propose to examine the seven quotations in Hebrews 1 from the textual point of view with the purpose of determining how closely they follow the Septuagint and how correctly the Septuagint translates the Masoretic text.

The first two quotations, which are taken from Ps. 2:7 ( *υἱός μου εἶ σύ, ἐξ ἡ σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε* ) and from 2 Sam. 7:14 ( *ἐξ ἡ ἕσομαι αὐτῷ εἰς πατέρα, καὶ αὐτὸς ἔσται μοι εἰς υἱόν* ) respectively, may be conveniently treated together inasmuch as neither presents any important variations from the Septuagint. In the first case there is an exact verbal agreement between the rendering in Hebrews and most manuscripts of the Septuagint. A very minor disagreement we find in codex A which reads *γεγέννηκά* instead of *γεγέννηκά*. However, this scribal error, as Swete remarks,<sup>1</sup> was corrected in later manuscripts by the second corrector of A. The only difference between the Septuagint and the Masoretic text of Ps. 2:7 consists in the addition of the copula *εἶ* in the Septuagint. The quotation from 2 Sam. 7:14 presents no differences at all either between the text of Hebrews and the Septuagint or between the Septuagint and the Masoretic text. We may, therefore, conclude that these two quotations are exact quotations from the

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<sup>1</sup>Henry Barclay Swete, The Old Testament in Greek According to the Septuagint (Cambridge: University Press, 1907), II, 214.

Septuagint which, in turn, are exact translations of the corresponding passages in the Masoretic text.

The third quotation in Hebrews 1 (καὶ προσκυνήσάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες ἄγγελοι θεοῦ ) presents more of a problem. The initial problem arises from locating the Old Testament passage which underlies the quotation in Hebrews. Is the quotation taken from Ps. 97:7 or from Deut. 32:43? John Owen<sup>2</sup> argues that the quotation in Heb. 1:6 was not taken from Deut. 32:43 for two reasons. First of all, these words, so he contends, are not found in the original Hebrew text, but only in the corrupt Greek version. He explains this addition in the Greek text as an addition made, after the epistle to the Hebrews was written, by those who "not considering from whence it was taken . . . inserted it into that place of Moses, amidst other words of an alike sound, and somewhat an alike importance."<sup>3</sup> His second reason for denying that this quotation is from Deuteronomy is that the Song of Moses is not concerned with the bringing in of the first-born into the world as it must be according to the preface of this quotation in Hebrews. Owen's two reasons, however, are unconvincing. The latter argument is based on the debated question whether the bringing in of the first-born refers to the second or to the first advent of Christ. Even if the "first advent" interpretation were to be regarded as the better one, who can definitely say, in

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<sup>2</sup>John Owen, An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews with Preliminary Exercitations in The Works of John Owen, edited by W. H. Goold and C. W. Quick (Philadelphia: Leighton Publication, 1869), XII, 161.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

view of the relative lack of differentiation between the two advents of the Messiah in the Old Testament and the apparently strange way in which the New Testament writers applied the Old Testament to the Messiah, that the Song of Moses has absolutely no reference at all to the first coming of Christ? Owen's first argument may be set aside because of the consideration that our author regards the Septuagint to be as authoritative as the Masoretic text. If some justification for his quoting a non-canonical passage of the the Old Testament is called for, it may be found in the fact that the canonical passage Ps. 97:7 expresses the same thought. Moreover, further evidence for the Deuteronomic quotation is this that Heb. 1:6 is related more closely to Deut. 32:43 than to Ps. 97:7. For example, in the Psalm the verb is in the second person plural indicative ( προσκυνήσατε ) whereas in Hebrews and Deuteronomy it is in the third person plural imperative ( προσκυνήσατωσαν ). Also, the Psalm reads αὐτοῦ instead of Θεοῦ. Finally, in the Psalm the initial καὶ which both Deuteronomy and Hebrews include is absent. For these reasons this quotation is now generally admitted to be from Deut. 32:43.

Since there is some confusion among commentators as to what the Septuagint manuscripts of Deuteronomy actually read, our next concern must be to establish the correct reading of the Septuagint manuscripts. We may begin with an examination of codex A since there is more agreement here among commentators than with codex B. All scholars agree that A reads οὐκ instead of ἄγγελος. Most of them<sup>4</sup> agree also that A in-

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<sup>4</sup>These include Alan England Brooke and Norman McLean, editors, The

cludes Πάντες. We may safely say, then that the codex A reading is καὶ προσκυνήσασαν αὐτῷ πάντες υἱοὶ θεοῦ. The text of Deut. 32:43 in codex A is also found in a recension appended to the Psalter. Here it reads ἄγγελοι instead of υἱοὶ.<sup>5</sup> The commentators are more evenly divided with respect to the reading of codex B. Most of them<sup>6</sup> read υἱοὶ without the πάντες.<sup>7</sup> Others read ἄγγελος.<sup>8</sup> Cumulative evidence suggests that B reads thus: καὶ προσκυνήσασαν αὐτῷ υἱοὶ θεοῦ. The Lucian recension reads, as in Heb. 1:6,

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Old Testament in Greek (London: Cambridge University Press, 1911), I III, 666; Swete, The Old Testament in Greek According to the Septuagint, II, 414; Franz Delitzsch, Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, translated from the German by Thomas L. Kingsbury (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952), I, 69. C. Spicq, L'Épître aux Hébreux (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1953), I, 335, states, however, that A omits πάντες.

<sup>5</sup>Delitzsch, op. cit., I, 68-69, states that this recension reads πάντες ἄγγελοι θεοῦ while Gottlieb Lünemann, Critical and Exegetical Hand-book to the Epistle to the Hebrews in Meyer's Critical and Exegetical Hand-book to the New Testament (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1885), p. 405, gives πάντες οἱ ἄγγελοι θεοῦ as its reading.

<sup>6</sup>Those reading υἱοὶ are: Brooke and McLean, op. cit., I III, 666; Swete, The Old Testament in Greek According to the Septuagint, II, 414; A. Rahlfs, editor, Psalmi cum Odis in Septuaginta: Societatis Scientiarum Göttingensis auctoritate (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1931), p. 350; James Moffatt, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924), p. 11; Brooke Foss Westcott, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951), p. 20; E. L. Lueker, "The Author of Hebrews: A Fresh Approach," Concordia Theological Monthly, XVII (July, 1946), 501; J. van der Ploeg, "L'exégèse de l'Ancien Testament dans l'Épître aux Hébreux," Révue Biblique, LIV (1947), 201.

<sup>7</sup>Of the authors listed in the previous footnote, Westcott, op. cit., p. 20, is the only one to include it.

<sup>8</sup>Lünemann, op. cit., p. 404, and Delitzsch, op. cit., I, 68, read πάντες ἄγγελοι. Spicq, op. cit., in vol. 2 at p. 18 agrees with this reading, but in vol. 1 at p. 335 he states that B omits πάντες.

πάντες ἄγγελοι θεοῦ.<sup>9</sup> Codices F and Θ also read πάντες ἄγγελοι.<sup>10</sup>

With these readings of the Septuagint manuscripts of Deut. 32:43 in mind, we must now raise the question: "From which manuscript did our author quote?" Three possible answers have been suggested. Lünemann<sup>11</sup> maintains that the quotation in question was taken from the second recension of codex A which was found in the appendix to the Psalter. This is likely, according to him, in view of the close dependence of Hebrews on A instead of on B and the frequency of quotations from the Psalter in Hebrews 1 and 2. If this were the case, then our author would have deleted the *οἱ* which was interpolated between the πάντες and the ἄγγελοι of this recension of A. It might also be added in favor of Lünemann's view that the other quotations in Hebrews from Deuteronomy (10:30; 12:15,21; 13:5) also differ so widely from our present Septuagint manuscripts that they probably were taken from some special version of Deuteronomy used for worship. These quotations cannot be mere paraphrases of the Septuagint because in at least two instances they are identical with the quotations of other contemporary writers. The quotation in Hebrews 10:32, which is probably from Deut. 32:35 is the same as Rom. 12:19 and the Targum Onkelos, and the quotation in Hebrews 13:5 is the same as that in Philo and Clement of Alexandria.<sup>12</sup> A second sugges-

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<sup>9</sup>Spicq, *op. cit.*, I, 335; A. R. Gordon, "Quotations," in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Apostolic Church*, edited by James Hastings (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1918), II, 296.

<sup>10</sup>Brooke and McLean, *op. cit.*, I III, 666; Lueker, "The Author of Hebrews: A Fresh Approach," *op. cit.*, p. 501; Swete, *The Old Testament in Greek According to the Septuagint*, II, 414; Moffatt, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

<sup>11</sup>Lünemann, *op. cit.*, p. 405.

<sup>12</sup>Spicq, *op. cit.*, I, 336.

tion, starting from the assumption that the Septuagint reading was originally *υἱοὶ* and not *ἄγγελου*, and that the F reading of *ἄγγελου* was a later correction, states that our author himself probably changed the text under the influence of Ps. 97:7<sup>13</sup> or that he cites the Septuagint gloss ad sensum, in replacing the difficult word *ενισχυσάτωσαν* with *προσκυνήσάτωσαν*.<sup>14</sup> The third answer to the question of the original Septuagint manuscript used by our author for his quotation in Hebrews 1:6, as suggested by Lueker,<sup>15</sup> is this that our author quoted from some A family manuscript which perhaps read *ἄγγελου*. This view rests on the supposition that the *ἄγγελου* reading of F, which is the closest manuscript to the A family, is an indication that this was also the original reading of at least some manuscripts of A. The change in our present A manuscripts to *υἱοὶ* would then be explained as an attempt to rejoin the Hebrew.

Thus, the quotation of Hebrews 1:6 could have been taken either from a second recension of A found at the back of the Psalter, or from a B manuscript which our author slightly modified, or from an A type manuscript which originally might have read *ἄγγελου*. As will be shown in the next chapter, our author is more often in accord with the A type manuscripts, and for this reason either the first or third suggestion seem preferable.

The Septuagint and the Masoretic text are even more at variance

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<sup>13</sup>Moffatt, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>14</sup>Van der Ploeg, "L'exégèse de l'Ancien Testament dans l'Épître aux Hébreux," op. cit., p. 202.

<sup>15</sup>Lueker, "The Author of Hebrews: A Fresh Approach," op. cit., p. 501.

with each other than are Hebrews and the Septuagint. This variance will be seen more readily once the complete text of Deut. 32:43 in Greek is carefully looked at:

- a.1. εὐφράνθητε, οὐρανοί, ἅμα αὐτῷ,  
 2. καὶ προσκυνήσατέ τω αὐτῷ υἱοῦ θεοῦ.
- b.1. εὐφράνθητε, ἔθνη, μετὰ τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ,  
 2. καὶ ἐνισχυσάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες ἄγγελοι θεοῦ
- c.1. ὅτι τὸ ἄμα τῶν υἱῶν αὐτοῦ ἐκδικᾶται,  
 2. καὶ ἐκδικήσει καὶ ἅντα ποδώσει δίκην τοῖς ἐχθροῖς
- d.1. καὶ τοῖς μισοῦσιν ἅντα ποδώσει,  
 2. καὶ ἐκκαθαρίει κύριος τὴν γῆν τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ.

There is no counter-part in the Masoretic for a.1. and a.2. and b.2.

The third line (b.1.) corresponds exactly with the first line of the Masoretic text (יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ) except for the omission in the Hebrew of אֱלֹהֵינוּ. Lines c and d are an expansion of the second line in the Masoretic text.

Westcott<sup>16</sup> suggests that this gloss was probably derived from Ps. 97:7 since it could easily have gained currency from the liturgical use of the Song of Moses. The influence of Ps. 97:7, he points out, is all the more natural since the thoughts of the Psalm and the Song are similar. Both look forward to the time when the powers idolized by the nations will recognize the absolute sovereignty of Jehovah. Delitzsch<sup>17</sup> prefers to speak of the Septuagint gloss as a Mosaic composition from

<sup>16</sup>Westcott, op. cit., p. 20.

<sup>17</sup>Delitzsch, op. cit., I, 69.



Is. 44:23 (which speaks of the worship of Jehovah by the earth, mountains, and trees for His final redemption) and from Ps. 29:1 (where the  $\text{לַיְיָ יִגְדֹל}$ , ascribe strength, is changed to  $\text{לַיְיָ יִתְקַדֵּשׁ}$ , confess His strength, which Delitzsch takes to be the proper meaning of  $\text{ἐνισχύσάτωσαν αὐτῷ}$  as well as from Ps. 97:7 ( $\text{προσκυνήσάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ}$ ). This composition, according to Delitzsch, resulted from the desire to give to this Song a more hymn-like close.

Van der Ploeg,<sup>18</sup> on the other hand, would explain the deviation between the Septuagint and the Masoretic text on different grounds. Though he admits the possible influence of Ps. 97:7 in the composition of Deut. 32:43, he is not convinced of it. He would rather explain the Septuagint gloss by means of a conjectural reconstruction of an original Hebrew reading. He suggests that lines a.1. and b.1. could be two different interpretations of texts only slightly differing,—the differences of  $\text{לַיְיָ יִגְדֹל}$  and  $\text{לַיְיָ יִתְקַדֵּשׁ}$  and of  $\text{יִשְׂמְחוּ}$  and  $\text{יִשְׂמְחוּ לַיְיָ}$ . Likewise, lines a.2. and b.2. could equally represent two translations of the same text, perhaps  $\text{לַיְיָ יִתְקַדֵּשׁ יְיָ יִשְׂמְחוּ בְּעַמּוֹתָיִם וְיִתְקַדֵּשׁ יְיָ יִשְׂמְחוּ בְּעַמּוֹתָיִם}$ . The primitive text, then, might have read as follows:  $\text{לַיְיָ יִתְקַדֵּשׁ יְיָ יִשְׂמְחוּ בְּעַמּוֹתָיִם וְיִתְקַדֵּשׁ יְיָ יִשְׂמְחוּ בְּעַמּוֹתָיִם}$ , "let the heavens rejoice in my people and let the sons of God give glory to them." If this were the original text, then the Greek translators would not have understood that the object of the adoration by the heavens and the angels was not God but Israel, or at least they would have been so troubled by such a thought that they would have changed the

<sup>18</sup>Van der Ploeg, "L'exégèse de l'Ancien Testament dans l'Épître aux Hébreux," *op. cit.*, pp. 201-202.

original Hebrew reading so as to direct the praise to God instead of to Israel. Although this bold reconstruction correctly points out the parallel between lines a.1., b.1. and a.2., b.2. the view of Westcott is still to be preferred because less conjectural.

We may then conclude that this third quotation follows the Septuagint gloss of Deut. 32:43 without at all attempting to rejoin the Hebrew. It probably follows exactly some A type manuscript, but if not, it may at least be affirmed that because all the words of this quotation are found in the Septuagint of Deut. 32:43, the only change made by our author would have been a change of word order.

The fourth quotation (ὁ ποιῶν τοὺς ἀγγέλους αὐτοῦ πνεύματα, καὶ τοὺς λειτουργοὺς αὐτοῦ πυρὸς φλόγα) is from Ps. 104:4. It is an exact quotation from the recension text of A with the exception of the change of spelling of φλόγα to φλέγα. This rendering (πυρὸς φλόγα) is also supported by two Egyptian versions, the Boharic and the Sahidic, as well as by the Lucian recension. If the quotation is not from codex A whose text, it might be argued, was altered to agree with the quotation in Heb. 1:7, then it is from codex B with the insignificant change of πῦρ φλέγον, a flaming fire, to πυρὸς φλόγα, a flame of fire. In any case it is not close to Aquila (πῦρ λάβρον, a vehement fire) or to Symmachus (πυρίνην φλόγα, a fiery flame).

Although the Masoretic text is closer to B than to A in the  $\text{וְהָיָה הַיָּם וְהַיַּבְשָׁתִּים}$ , a flaming fire, it differs from both codices in the omission of the "and." Otherwise, the Septuagint is a faithful rendering of the Hebrew. We here have an example, then, of an almost exact quotation from the A manuscript of the Septuagint.

The fifth quotation ( ὁ θρόνος σου ὁ θεὸς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος, καὶ ἡ ῥάβδος τῆς εὐθύτητος ῥάβδος τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ. ἡγάπησας δικαιοσύνην καὶ ἐμίσησας ἀνομίαν· διὰ τοῦτο ἔχρισέν σε, ὁ θεός, ὁ θεός σου ἔλαλον ἀγαλλιάσεως παρὰ τοῖς μετόχοις σου ) is from Ps. 45:6,7. In considering the differences between this quotation and the Septuagint, five points are to be mentioned. First, the reading εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος agrees with the codices ARTX against codex B. Secondly, the καὶ in the quotation is an addition made by our author. Hofmann has erroneously suggested that our author introduced this καὶ in order to divide this one quotation into two, thus separating what is addressed to Jehovah from what is addressed to the Messianic King. But, as Delitzsch well replies,<sup>19</sup> part of the argument of our author depends on the address of the Son as ὁ θεός. More plausible seems the explanation of Synge<sup>20</sup> who claims that our author is quoting from a book of testimonies in which it was not clear that these two parts were originally one quotation. Perhaps it is best still to say with Moffatt<sup>21</sup> that our author added the καὶ simply to introduce a parallel line after the analogy of the καὶ ἔργα etc. in 1:10. A third difference consists in the transposition of the article ἡ from the second to the first ῥάβδος. Then, again, the article τῆς is inserted before εὐθύτητος. Our author also substitutes αὐτοῦ for σου in τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ. And, lastly, the quotation reads ἀνομίαν with

<sup>19</sup>Delitzsch, op. cit., I, 76.

<sup>20</sup>Francis Charles Synge, Hebrews and the Scriptures (London: S.P.C.K., 1959), pp. 53-54.

<sup>21</sup>Moffatt, op. cit., p. 13.

B and others against A.

It is to be noted that in the first point our author sides with A against B whereas in the last he sides with B against A. It would seem as if our author were quoting from an A manuscript with some B reading since this is not the only instance in this epistle in which the author, while generally following an A type manuscript, has some B readings. More will be said of this in the following chapter. Of the four remaining differences, one may be said to be an addition of our author (*καὶ*), but the other three pose more of a problem. They can neither be explained as textual variants of some Septuagint manuscripts because no Septuagint manuscripts support this reading, nor can they be accounted for by making them the work of the author of Hebrews because it is difficult to see why he would either have transposed the  $\alpha\iota\tau\omicron\upsilon$  or substituted  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$  for  $\sigma\omicron\upsilon$ . These changes may be indications that we no longer possess the manuscript used by the author.

In conclusion, then, we may affirm first that our author is following an A manuscript with some B influence,—one which we probably do not possess, and, secondly, that though he has made some minor changes in the text, he remains generally faithful to the Septuagint.

No differences exist between the Septuagint of Ps. 45:6,7 and the Masoretic text. It may be noted, however, that some commentators<sup>22</sup> have suggested what they think was the original reading of the Masoretic text. They suppose that the Masoretic text originally read *YHVH*, shall

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<sup>22</sup>A. F. Kirkpatrick, The Book of Psalms in The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, edited by A. F. Kirkpatrick (Cambridge: University Press, 1902), p. 218, mentions this suggestion but rejects it.

be, which the elohist editor supposed to be YHWH, Jehovah, and so changed to  $\text{נְּיָיִךְ}$ . Thus, the original text would have read: "Your throne shall be forever and ever." There is no manuscript evidence for this at all.

The next quotation ( $\sigma\upsilon$  κατ' ἀρχάς, κύριε, τὴν γῆν ἐθεμελίωσας, καὶ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου εἰσὶν οἱ οὐρανοί· αὐτοὶ ἀπολοῦνται, σὺ δὲ διαμένεις· καὶ πάντες ὡς ἱμάτιον παλαιωθήσονται, καὶ ὡσεὶ περιβόλαιον ἐλίξῃς αὐτούς, ὡς ἱμάτιον καὶ ἀλλαγήσονται· σὺ δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς εἶ καὶ τὰ ἔτη σου οὐκ ἐκλείψουσιν) is from Ps. 102:25-27. The textual changes of this quotation from the Septuagint are the following: (a) The position of  $\sigma\upsilon$  at the beginning of the quotation, which agrees with no Septuagint manuscripts, and is thus to be considered as a change made by the author for the sake of emphasis; (b) The position of κύριε before τὴν γῆν, which is against both B which reverses the order and δ' which omits κύριε altogether although it is in agreement with the manuscripts ART; (c) The addition of the second ὡς ἱμάτιον which is contrary to all Septuagint tradition and is probably a scribal error due to the previous mention of ὡς ἱμάτιον (v. 11a) and ὡς περιβόλαιον (v. 12a); (d)  $\zeta\upsilon$  in line 12c which disagrees with the  $\sigma\omega\iota$  of A, but which agrees with B. The ἐλίξῃς (v. 12a), it may be noted, is the reading of most leading Septuagint manuscripts. It is the reading of B (in spite of Lünemann<sup>23</sup> who would have B read ἀλλάξῃς), of A (ἐλείξῃς), of the Lucian recension, and of other manuscripts in such forms as ἐλίξῃς (T), ellixis (R), ἐλίξῃς (1219) and εἰλείξῃς

<sup>23</sup>Lünemann, *op. cit.*, p. 409.



with Ps. 110:1, and the only difference between the Septuagint and the Masoretic text is in the minor change of the plural  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa \delta\epsilon\acute{\xi}\iota\omega\nu$  for the singular  $\text{יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ}$ .

It would appear, then, from these seven quotations that the author of Hebrews was quoting from some manuscript of the A family which had some affinity with B. Moreover, the not too infrequent deviations of these quotations from all known manuscripts seems to indicate that we no longer possess this A manuscript. In general, however, these quotations do faithfully reproduce the Septuagint tradition.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE MANUSCRIPTS

From what Greek manuscript of the Old Testament did the author of Hebrews make his quotations? This question will be discussed in this chapter.

The answer to this question depends largely upon one's theoretical reconstruction of the history of the Septuagint. If, according to the current theory, the Greek Old Testament, which was translated only once in the third or second century B.C., existed in many different recensions during the period of the New Testament writings, our task would be to locate, if possible, the Septuagint recension from which the author of Hebrews made his quotations. If, on the other hand, the Hebrew Old Testament was translated into Greek several times, existed in these different forms during the first century A.D., and if these several translations were only later harmonized so as to form a standard text, then our task would not be to examine the quotations in Hebrews in the light of the present manuscripts of the Septuagint, but to discover all possible traces of the earlier forms of the Greek Old Testament.

For the present we shall operate on the basis of the current theory of the Septuagint, and ask with Spicq: "Est-il possible d'identifier celle (la récénsion) qui était à la disposition de l'auteur de Hébr.?"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>C. Spicq, L'Épître aux Hébreux (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1953), I, 335.



Since the appearance of the works of Bleek and Büchsel, there has been general agreement that Hebrews, in contrast to Paul's writings, follows codex A rather than codex B.<sup>2</sup> The evidence for this view is quite strong. For example, Spicq gives eleven instances in which Hebrews follows A against B. These are: (a) The *πρὸς φλόγα* of Heb. 1:7; (b) *εἶδον* in Heb. 3:10, which is closer to *ἴδον* than to B's *ἴδουσαν*; (c) The omission in Heb. 5:6b of *εἶ*; (d) The *λέγει* reading of Heb. 8:8 against B's *φησὶν*; (e) The *ἐπαύσα . . . κἀγὼ* of Heb. 8:9 against the *διεθέμην . . . καὶ ἐγὼ*; (f) The omission both of *μου* after *διαθήκη* and of *δώσω* after *σίδους* and the reading *ἐπιγράψω* instead of B's *γράψω* in Heb. 8:10; (g) The *μη* of Heb. 8:11 which B omits; (h) The plural *ὀλοκαυτώματα* instead of the singular as in B; (i) The insertion of *μου* after *δίκαιος*; (j) The *παιδεύει* reading in Heb. 12:6 against B's *ἐλέγχει*; (k) The *μή τις ρίζα πικρίας ἄνω φύουσα ἐνοχλή* of Heb. 12:15, which is closer to A's *μή τις ἔστιν ἐν ὑμῖν ρίζα ἄνω πικρίας φύουσα ἐνοχλή* than to B's *μή τις ἔστιν ἐν ὑμῖν ρίζα ἄνω φύουσα ἐν χολῇ καὶ πικρία*. Or, to give the evidence in a more statistical form, we might say, with Lueker,<sup>3</sup> that while Hebrews follows A forty-five times and is against A only twelve times, it follows B only twenty-three times and varies from it on as many as thirty-two other occasions. It is most certain, then, that our author is closest to some form of codex A.

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>E. L. Lueker, "The Author of Hebrews: A Fresh Approach," Concordia Theological Monthly, XVII (July, 1946), p. 501.

Is it possible to determine more precisely what kind of A manuscript he possessed? Three attempts have been made to do so.

Lueker<sup>4</sup> points out that of the twelve instances in which our author's quotations differ from A, three are scribal errors which were corrected in the later A manuscripts, two others have important New Testament manuscripts supporting the A reading in Hebrews, and two others are supported by codex F, the closest relative of A. He concludes that "the writer of Hebrews followed a text tradition which is remarkably well preserved in the manuscripts AF."<sup>5</sup> It is highly improbable, he argues, that a later scribe either changed the quotations in Hebrews in order to make them conform to A or else changed the AF manuscripts to follow Hebrews. A change in Hebrews is unlikely because there is no hint of this change in the later manuscripts. For example, Clement of Rome at an early date quotes from the Hebrews text of Ps. 104:14 with the characteristic A reading of *πυρὸς φλόγα*. A change in the AF tradition leaves unexplained not only those instances in which one would expect the AF manuscripts to agree with Hebrews but does not find it so, but also the disagreement between the AF tradition and all the books of the New Testament other than Hebrews and Mark.

Swete<sup>6</sup> noticed that Hebrews, while generally following an A type manuscript, also agrees once with Theodotion and a few other times with

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Henry Barclay Swete, An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek (Cambridge: University Press, 1902), pp. 402-403.

the Lucian recension. This observation is quite correct. Hebrews does follow the Lucian recension in the addition of  $\delta \theta ε \acute{o} \varsigma$  (Heb. 4:4), in the addition of  $\pi \acute{\alpha} \nu \tau \alpha$  (Heb. 8:5), in the  $\epsilon \upsilon \delta \acute{o} \kappa \eta \sigma \alpha \varsigma$  reading of Heb. 10:6 (A has  $\epsilon \acute{\sigma} \eta \tau \eta \sigma \alpha \varsigma$  and B,  $\eta \tau \eta \sigma \alpha \varsigma$ ), and in the omission of  $\epsilon \acute{\sigma} \tau \iota \nu$  in Heb. 12:15. Hebrews is closest to Theodotion in the reading of  $\epsilon \phi \rho \alpha \xi \alpha \nu$  in Heb. 11:33.<sup>7</sup> In view of these Lucian and Theodotion readings, Swete proposes the theory that the author of Hebrews "used a recension which was current in Palestine, possibly also in Asia Minor, and which afterwards supplied materials to Theodotion, and left traces in the Antiochian Bible, and in the text represented by cod. A."<sup>8</sup>

Spicq<sup>9</sup> agrees with Swete that our author possessed an A type manuscript with some Lucian and Theodotion readings, but he observes that this A manuscript must also have had some similarity with codex B. The reason for this, he points out, is that in at least four instances the quotation in Hebrews follows B against A. These are: (a) Heb. 1:9 where Hebrews and B have  $\alpha \nu \omicron \mu \acute{\iota} \alpha \nu$  and A,  $\alpha \sigma \tau \iota \kappa \acute{\iota} \alpha \nu$ ; (b) Heb. 2:6 where B has  $\tau \acute{\iota}$  and A,  $\tau \acute{\iota} \varsigma$ ; (c) The B reading of  $\epsilon \acute{\iota}$  in Heb. 3:11 against A's  $\tilde{\eta}$ ; (d) Heb. 8:11 which, although in general accord with A, follows B's  $\tau \acute{\omicron} \nu \pi \alpha \lambda \acute{\iota} \tau \eta \nu \alpha \upsilon \tau \omicron \upsilon$  . . .  $\tau \acute{\omicron} \nu \alpha \delta \epsilon \lambda \phi \acute{\omicron} \nu \alpha \upsilon \tau \omicron \upsilon$  against A's  $\tau \acute{\omicron} \nu \alpha \delta \epsilon \lambda \phi \acute{\omicron} \nu \alpha \upsilon \tau \omicron \upsilon$  . . .  $\tau \acute{\omicron} \nu \pi \lambda \acute{\eta} \sigma \iota \nu \alpha \upsilon \tau \omicron \upsilon$ . He concludes that our author adopted a manuscript of the A family which had certain readings similar to B and the Lucian recension. For Daniel, he followed Theodotion. And for

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<sup>7</sup>This evidence is given by Spicq, op. cit., I, 335.

<sup>8</sup>Swete, An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek, p. 403.

<sup>9</sup>Spicq, op. cit., I, 335.

Deuteronomy he must have had a special kind of manuscript,--one which was probably used in the worship services, in view of the fact that two of the variant quotations from Deuteronomy agree with those made by contemporary writers.

We have already had occasion to point out the main difference between the views of Swete and Spicq. To mention it again briefly, Swete prefers to explain the differences between certain readings of the quotations in Hebrews and the present Septuagint manuscripts on the basis of quotations made from memory whereas Spicq refers them to a Septuagint manuscript which is no longer in existence. Spicq is probably the more correct although it must be understood that this lost manuscript could not have been very far removed from the present manuscripts.

We may, therefore, conclude that the writer of Hebrews made his quotations from an A type manuscript which had some affinities with the Lucian recension, the codex Ambrosianus, and the codex Vaticanus.

We next turn our attention to the more recent theory of the Septuagint, as set forth by P. Kahle,<sup>10</sup> and to the implications of this theory for the problem of New Testament quotations.

Kahle's point of departure for his reconstruction of the history of the Septuagint seems to be first, a re-evaluation of the letter of Aristeas and secondly, the results of his investigations on the Aramaic Targums. The only interesting feature of the letter of Aristeas is, in his estimation, the purpose for which it was written because the events

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<sup>10</sup>Paul Ernst Kahle, The Cairo Geniza: The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy, 1941 (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), pp. 132-179.

it relates are certainly not historical. He describes the letter as a work of propaganda for a Greek version of the Torah regarded by the Jews of Alexandria as the official text. This official text was probably the result of revision of some earlier Greek translations of the Pentateuch. It was not accomplished, then, by a commission of translators who were Palestinian Jews who had come down to Alexandria as the legendary letter would have it, but rather by a commission of revisers who lived at Alexandria. Kahle emphatically states that the letter gives no warrant for supposing that any section of the Old Testament other than the Torah was canonized by the Jews. Kahle noticed in his work on the Targums that the Palestinian Jews, who were in need of a translation of the Hebrew into the common Aramaic language, made repeated attempts at such a translation before one eventually gained more recognition than the others and became the official text for this community. And, even after this text had become the standard one, other translations continued to exist side by side with it. Kahle assumes that the Alexandrian Jews had a similar experience. They, too, would have often attempted a Greek translation of the Torah before a revised edition was finally accepted by them as the authoritative text. This standard text, again on the analogy of the Aramaic Targums, would not have immediately gained such universal recognition as to have shelved all other Greek Torahs, but would rather have existed side by side with them during the following centuries. Then, towards the end of the first century, Kahle continues, the Jews gradually lost all interest in the Septuagint version and adopted the Masoretic text instead. Because this new Hebrew text differed from the Hebrew manuscripts from which the Septuagint was trans-

lated, the Jews smoothed out the differences either by new translations on different principles (Aquila and Symmachus) or at least by a revision of the Septuagint (Theodotion). We know that they did go so far as to call the Septuagint the work of Satan.<sup>11</sup> Their loss of interest in the Septuagint would thus have resulted in the disappearance of all Septuagint manuscripts which were used and copied by the Jews. We, today, Kahle emphasizes, no longer possess any Greek manuscripts of Jewish origin because they passed out of the hands of the Jews into the hands of the Christians who later destroyed them.

The church, then, according to Kahle, took over the numerous Greek translations of the Old Testament. Moreover, it was the church, he states, which, feeling the need of a standard Greek version not only of the Torah but also of the rest of the Old Testament, created an official text of the Septuagint from the Jewish translations and which conferred upon this text the term "Septuagint" which the Jews used only of the Greek Torah. The standardization of the whole Old Testament in Greek, then, would have been the product of the Christian community and not of the Jews. The Jewish translations which differed from the official copy were then no longer copied by the Christians.

Kahle submits much evidence in support of his theory. He points to the quotations in Philo, Josephus, and the New Testament, and explains their divergence from what is now called the Septuagint on the grounds that these authors made use of some non-canonical Greek translation of the Old Testament. He does the same with a papyrus containing Job 33 and 34, whose text differs from our Greek Bible. The variant Greek texts of the Book of Judges are likewise explained on the grounds that

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 139.

they are different translations and not merely different recensions of an originally uniform text.

Kahle also draws out the implications of this new theory for the present direction of Septuagint studies. The present student must not seek to reconstruct the "original" Septuagint on the basis of present manuscripts, versions and "recensions," as Lagarde attempted to do, because this is bound to be a failure. Instead, he must seek to collect all traces of the earlier Jewish translations on the basis of: (a) The so-called "recensions" of the Christian Septuagint indicated by Jerome, which are in reality revisions of older versions; (b) The New Testament quotations; (c) The older translations made from the Greek Bible; (d) The Hexapla which is a collection of older Jewish versions not influenced by the Christian tendency to unification (especially the anonymous versions).

More important for us, however, is the implication of this reconstruction of the history of the Septuagint on the problem of the New Testament quotations. According to this view, what manuscript did the author of Hebrews have before him? As we have seen above, it was the Christians who, according to Kahle, made the official text of the Old Testament and gave it the name "Septuagint." This process took place during the second century A.D., so that during the time of the formation of the New Testament several different translations of the Old Testament were still in use. The writers of the New Testament, then, probably used different forms of the Greek Old Testament. They did not quote from an official text. These New Testament quotations are genuine traces of the earlier forms of the Greek Bible because they were recog-

nized as having their own authority, and so were not altered so as to harmonize with the Christian Septuagint, as was the case with the quotations in Philo, Josephus, and the church fathers. If it is true that the Christian Septuagint often has the same reading as the New Testament quotations, it is to be assumed, Kahle explains, that the Christian Septuagint has preserved a reading of one of the different forms of the Greek Old Testament, which was later incorporated into the standard text. But where the Septuagint does differ from the New Testament quotations, Kahle continues, there is a clear indication that the New Testament writers quoted from other forms of the Greek Bible. These differences cannot generally be explained as free quotations of the Septuagint although in a few instances this may have been the case.<sup>12</sup>

Kahle goes on to suggest that one of these other forms of the Greek Torah used by the New Testament writers and their contemporaries had characteristics of the Samaritan Pentateuch. Examples of New Testament quotations from readings similar to the Samaritan Pentateuch are Acts 7:4 (which quotes Gen. 11:32), Acts 7:32 (from Ex. 3:6), the history of Israel as summarized by Stephen in Acts 7, and Hebrews 9:3ff. In Heb. 9:3ff. the misunderstanding of the author of Hebrews in stating that the golden altar of incense was located in the Holy of Holies, is more easily accounted for by the reading in the Samaritan Pentateuch than by those in the Septuagint or the Masoretic text.<sup>13</sup> Thus, Kahle suggests the possible connection between a Greek translation from the

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 165.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., pp. 146-147.



Samaritan Pentateuch and the New Testament quotations.

According to Kahle's theory, then, the present manuscripts of the Greek Old Testament, which reflect only the Christian Septuagint tradition, are of no help as far as rediscovering the manuscripts which were at the disposal of the New Testament writers is concerned. Kahle has "no interest in proving that these quotations are more or less in accordance with the Christian Septuagint."<sup>14</sup> He is interested rather in working back to some of the older Jewish translations which were presumably in the hands of the first century Christians. What Greek manuscript did the author of Hebrews have before him? Some Jewish translation which we no longer possess.

The task of investigating more systematically the New Testament quotations which differ from the Christian Septuagint, however, was taken up by Sperber, a follower of Kahle. In his article "New Testament and Septuagint,"<sup>15</sup> he set out to discover from what manuscript the New Testament quotations were taken. He begins his investigation by comparing the New Testament quotations as found in B with the corresponding passage from the Old Testament of this same manuscript, and he concludes that,

at as early a period as the time of the compilation of the New Testament, the Old Testament in Greek must have been published and known in at least two forms,—one known to us as the Septuagint, and the other preserved to us in some, at least, of the quotations

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 165.

<sup>15</sup>Alexander Sperber, "New Testament and Septuagint," Journal of Biblical Literature, LIX (1940), 193-293.

contained in the New Testament.<sup>16</sup>

He then seeks after this other Greek Bible which he tentatively calls the "Bible of the Apostles." He finds it in Origen's Hexapla. Swete<sup>17</sup> had held that Origen's monumental work was an attempt to restore the Septuagint to its "Hebraica veritas," that is, to the Hebrew text of Origen's day. This task was made necessary, according to Swete, because,

it was unfair to the Jew to quote against him passages from the LXX which were wanting in his own Bible, and injurious to the Church herself to withhold from her anything in the Hebrew Bible which the LXX did not represent.<sup>18</sup>

As concerns Origen's symbols in the fifth column, Swete interpreted the obelus as marking out the words lacking in the Hebrew and the asterisk as marking out the words lacking in the Septuagint but present in the Hebrew. Thus, according to Swete, Origen's Hexapla was merely a recension.

Sperber sees at least the four following weak spots in this interpretation:

- a. If the Septuagint was a slavish translation of the Hebrew Bible of Origen's day, it must be assumed that the Hebrew text must also have undergone a change from the time of the original translation until Origen's day, and, in that case, the Hebrew text which was in Origen's hands could not have been considered as the "Hebraica veritas."
- b. Swete's argument that it was "unfair to the Jew to quote against him passages from the LXX which were wanting in his own Bible" is not plausible in view of the fact that not only are many changes between the Septuagint and Hebrew unimportant from a theological point of view but also in some cases the Septua-

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<sup>16</sup>Sperber, "New Testament and Septuagint," op. cit., p. 202.

<sup>17</sup>Swete, An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek, pp. 59-72.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 61.

gint rendering gives less support to the Christian position than the Hebrew.

- c. More than an average knowledge of Hebrew is necessary to restore the Septuagint to its original purity.
- d. Finally, a glance at Kittel's Biblia Hebraica with its numerous variant readings from the Septuagint shows the failure of his alleged attempt to restore the Septuagint to the Hebrew text of his own day.

Sperber suggests rather that Origen in his fifth column collected and combined two genuine and independent Septuagint families, known to us as the obelus and the asterisk, with the purpose of bringing them into line with each other. Origen had no intention, says Sperber, of harmonizing the current Septuagint text with the Hebrew text of his day. The Hebrew prototypes for these two Greek versions, he continues, are to be sought for in two families of manuscripts, the Masoretic family from which the asterisk was translated and the Samaritan Pentateuch family from which the obelus was translated. Sperber assumes that the Samaritan Pentateuch originally included the whole Old Testament. Next, after comparing the New Testament quotations with these two independent Greek translations, Sperber discovers "that the 'Bible of the Apostles' is identical with the asterisk type of the Hexaplaric LXX, which thus antedates by centuries the days of Origen."<sup>19</sup> He adds that Theodoret's text belongs basically to this asterisk family. Sperber also brings the codex A and codex B manuscripts into relation with the asterisk and obelus translations. He noticed that A and B have the same deviations from each other as those found between the asterisk and obelus. B belongs to

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<sup>19</sup>Sperber, "New Testament and Septuagint," op. cit., p. 283.

the obelus group and A to the asterisk group. He states that B probably preserves the obelus translation better than does A the asterisk since it was at A's expense that A and B were brought into agreement with each other. He is emphatic in maintaining that neither B nor A taken alone can be considered as the basic textual type of both the obelus and the asterisk.

Sperber claims, then, that the New Testament quotations were made from the Greek Translation preserved for us in Origen's asterisk text, which was an independent translation from a Hebrew manuscript approximating the Masoretic text, and that it is of the same family as Theodoret's text and codex A. He is in agreement with the conclusions of Swete, Spicq and Lueker in affirming that the author of Hebrews (more generally the New Testament writers) quoted from an A type manuscript in contrast to B, but he disagrees with them in affirming that Origen's asterisk text is closer than A to the manuscript used by the apostles. While generally following Kahle's theory, Sperber yet seems to differ with him at one rather important point. Sperber implies that the New Testament writers quoted uniformly from one translation whereas Kahle supposes that they used several different forms of the Greek Bible.<sup>20</sup>

The examination of the above two theories of the Septuagint is beyond the scope of this study. It may, however, be generally affirmed in answer to the question proposed in this chapter that the author of Hebrews did quote from some manuscript not much different from codex A.

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<sup>20</sup>Kahle, op. cit., p. 165.

## CHAPTER V

### THE MESSIANIC INTERPRETATION

It is not infrequently held by modern theologians that the method of interpreting the Old Testament used by the author of Hebrews, which, they say, approximates the allegorical method used by Philo in Alexandria, has no validity for us today. Moffatt<sup>1</sup> says, for example, that "The exegetical methods which the author took over from the Alexandrian school are not ours." Neil's comment<sup>2</sup> that the "far-fetched Old Testament exegesis and obscure Old Testament characters, like Melchizedek, have little or no interest for us today" is to the same effect. To say that our author took over the allegorical exegesis of the Alexandrian school, however, is incorrect. Nairne<sup>3</sup> puts his finger on the difference between our author's and Philo's exegesis when he states that "Philo deals with allegories, the Epistle with symbols [or types]." We might distinguish between the two by saying that "the typical is not properly a different or higher sense (as is the allegorical), but a different or higher application of the same sense"<sup>4</sup> or, to put it slightly

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<sup>1</sup>James Moffatt, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924), p. xlvi.

<sup>2</sup>W. Neil, The Epistle to the Hebrews in the Torch Bible Commentaries (London: SCM Press, 1955), p. 22.

<sup>3</sup>Alexander Nairne, The Epistle of Priesthood: Studies in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Edinburgh: n.p., 1913), p. 37.

<sup>4</sup>Patrick Fairbairn, The Typology of Scripture (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1911), I, 3.

differently, that,

dans l'explication typologique, on cherche à mettre en lumière l'intention que poursuivait le narrateur . . . tandis que dans l'allégorie . . . le commentateur choisit selon ses propres idées et souvent selon sa propre fantaisie.<sup>5</sup>

For a fuller discussion of the subject the reader may consult Spicq's treatment in his commentary.<sup>6</sup> On our part, we would like to show that our author's exegesis of the Old Testament in the first chapter of his epistle is far from being an outdated mode of reasoning. Given a correct understanding of his purpose for making his quotations and of the principles of exegesis with which he operates, the relevance of his argumentation from the Old Testament for the present day Christian will readily appear. A few general remarks on his purpose and principles may substantiate this statement.

We have already noted in the first chapter<sup>7</sup> that our author, in quoting from the Old Testament, does not have any apologetic purpose in mind. He is not interested in proving to unbelievers either the omniscience of God or the Messiahship of Jesus through the fulfillment in Jesus of earlier predictions, and, as a result, we should not be surprised to find our author quoting from passages of the Old Testament which are not directly prophetic. On the contrary, our author, in quoting from the Old Testament, has a didactic purpose. He is dealing with those who already believed, on the one hand, that all the Old Testament

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<sup>5</sup>C. Spicq, L'Épître aux Hébreux (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1953), I, 62, citing S. Javet, Dieu nous parla (Paris: n.p., 1945), pp. 67-68.

<sup>6</sup>Spicq, op. cit., I, 53-64.

<sup>7</sup>Supra, pp. 14-15.

was the divine book of promise, and, on the other, that Jesus Christ actually fulfilled this promise, but who, although convinced of the divine harmony between their "new" faith and the Old Testament books, were yet in need of having this supernatural harmony demonstrated to them. They yet wanted to be shown that the events, persons, and doctrines in the Old Testament actually do speak of Christ and that the Old Testament does contribute to their understanding of the "new" faith. Thus, it should not surprise us to find that the author applies to Christ verses from the Old Testament which are not literal predictions of the Messiah but statements addressed to man, to kings, or even to God.

It might further be asked, however: "Upon what principles of selection does our author operate in applying to Christ Jesus passages which do not seem to refer to Him at all?" "How may these passages be legitimately applied to Him?" Before answering this question, it is necessary to remember that our author was probably not acting upon any clearly enunciated principle at all. For him, the whole Old Testament was a prophecy of Christ, and so he was less concerned with distinguishing the various messianic meanings of the Old Testament than with assuring his readers that the messianic salvation which had recently been manifested to them was in complete accord with the Old Testament. Thus, he finds Christ in the Old Testament, as van der Ploeg says,

de diverses facons, sans qu'il se donne la peine de les distinguer nettement et clairement. Il ne le fait pas parce que les distinctions entre les divers sens de l'Écriture sont pour lui plus fluides que nettes.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>J. van der Ploeg, "L'exégèse de l'Ancien Testament dans l'Épître aux Hébreux," Révue Biblique, LIX (1947), 227.

The author was enabled by a process of divinely granted religious insight<sup>9</sup> to immediately discover Christ throughout the Old Testament, whereas later theologians and we ourselves arrive at this discovery mediately, that is to say, by a more reasoned process.

With this reminder, then, that we, like the author of Hebrews, are not always required to decide in what sense any given passage is messianic, we may state what appear to be some of the principles of selection which he tacitly assumes:

- a. Where God is described in His final manifestation for mercy or for judgment, the Messiah is to be understood because the Messiah is God manifest in the flesh.
- b. Where man is addressed in terms which no mere man can satisfy, there, in the background is the One Person who is both human and divine.
- c. Statements about the kings of Judah which rise above the historic reality into the ideal are messianic.

If these principles of exegesis and the author's purpose for making his quotations, as mentioned above, were understood and acknowledged, then the author's argumentation from the Old Testament would no longer be thought of as a "far-fetched Old Testament exegesis" which has "no interest for us today."

We may now turn more specifically to the investigation of our author's messianic interpretation of the Old Testament in Hebrews 1. We will be interested not only in what sense the Old Testament passages quoted may be understood as messianic, but also what the ancient rabbis

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<sup>9</sup>Spicq, *op. cit.*, I, 349-350, and L. Cerfaux, "Simples réflexions à propos de l'exégèse apostolique," dans *Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses*, 1949, pp. 565-576, claim that this insight or intuition was a charismatic gift which disappeared with the apostolic age.



thought of them.

The first quotation is from Ps. 2:7. This Psalm was interpreted messianically by most of the ancient Jews. Moffatt<sup>10</sup> does not state the situation positively enough when he says that this Psalm was perhaps messianic in some circles of Judaism. Spicq, following the work of Bonsirven,<sup>11</sup> is more correct in stating that "la tradition juive, hormis quelques exceptions, appliquant ce Psalm à Aaron, à David, ou au peuple d'Israel, l'a entendu d'abord et surtout du Messie."<sup>12</sup> He is supported by van der Ploeg who bases his conclusions on the work of Strack and Billerbeck<sup>13</sup> and states that "ce Psalm était considéré comme messianique par excellence par la plupart des anciens rabbins."<sup>14</sup> Van der Ploeg goes on to say that the messianic interpretation and especially the messianic title "Son" was abandoned by the Jews only for polemical reasons during the Christian era.<sup>15</sup>

Of course, Christians have always regarded Psalm 2 as a Messianic Psalm, although they have explained its messianic import in different

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<sup>10</sup>Moffatt, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>11</sup>J. Bonsirven, Le Judaïsme palestinien au temps de Jesus Christ (Paris, 1934), I, 366-367.

<sup>12</sup>Spicq, op. cit., II, 16.

<sup>13</sup>Herman L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, Die Briefe des Neuen Testaments und die Offenbarung Johannis in Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash (München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, c.1926), III, 673-677.

<sup>14</sup>Van der Ploeg, "L'exégèse de l'Ancien Testament dans l'Epître aux Hébreux," op. cit., p. 199.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

ways. Sampson<sup>16</sup> supposes that the Psalm speaks directly and exclusively of the eternal sonship of Christ who was begotten in eternity. In our day few will follow him completely in this interpretation. More widespread is the view that this Psalm is a combination of type and prophecy.<sup>17</sup> According to this view, David's kingdom was an image or type of the messianic kingdom to come, and in Psalm 2 David, upon the background of his own kingdom as type, directs the church prophetically and directly to this greater one to come. It is thus implied by this view that neither David nor any other king of Judah was ever directly called the son of God, even in some sense inferior to that in which Jesus is called the Son of God. If it is supposed that what is here spoken, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," has some reference to David, "yet it is not ascribed to him personally and absolutely, but merely considered as a type of Christ. What, then, is principally and directly intended in the words is to be sought for in Christ alone."<sup>18</sup> However, while those who hold this view agree in denying any application of Ps. 2:7 to the kings of Judah, they disagree regarding the precise meaning of the prophecy itself. Owen maintains that "the formal reason why

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<sup>16</sup>Francis S. Sampson, A Critical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, edited from the manuscript notes of the author by R. L. Dabney (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1857), pp. 57-60.

<sup>17</sup>Fairbairn, op. cit., I, 122-124, is an important representative of this group.

<sup>18</sup>John Owen, An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews with Preliminary Exercitations in The Works of John Owen, edited by Goold and Quick (Philadelphia: Leighton Publication, 1869), XII, 134.

he is so called [Son] is . . . his eternal sonship"<sup>19</sup> whereas Hengstenberg declares that "the King is named the Son of God not in a proper but in a figurative sense . . . [although this figurative sense] has certainly the essential and eternal one for its foundation."<sup>20</sup> Both Owen and Hengstenberg, however, agree that the begetting spoken of refers not to the eternal generation of the Son, but to some historic occasion on which He was declared so to be, and, in this respect they differ from Sampson. Others, who suppose that the Psalm refers only typically to the Messiah, would not deny the title "sons" to the kings of Israel as do those who sponsor the typico-prophetic exegesis. Kirkpatrick<sup>21</sup> maintains that the Israelite kings, as rulers and representatives of the people, were adopted by God as His sons. This sonship consisted in a moral relationship involving fatherly love and protection and filial obedience and devotion, and not in a natural descent. As sons, these anointed kings received the sovereignty over Israel and over all the nations, and thus became types of Him who, being truly the Son of God, would in reality receive a universal dominion. This explanation of the messianic import of this Psalm differs only in point of emphasis from that commonly called the "sensus plenior." According to van der Ploeg<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., XII, 136.

<sup>20</sup>E. W. Hengstenberg, Commentary on the Psalms (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1863), I, 32.

<sup>21</sup>A. F. Kirkpatrick, The Books of the Psalms in The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, edited by A. F. Kirkpatrick (Cambridge: University Press, 1902), pp. 5-7.

<sup>22</sup>Van der Ploeg, "L'exégèse de l'Ancien Testament dans l'Épître aux Hébreux," op. cit., pp. 199-200.

who has applied this mode of interpretation to the quotations in Hebrews 1, a divinely pre-established harmony between the Old and New Testaments gives rise to the existence of a "sensus plenior," or a profound meaning, of the words spoken in the Old Testament, which may be discovered in the light of additional revelation. By virtue of God's pre-ordained unity between the Old and New Testaments, words in the Old Testament which have an obvious and literal meaning in their context may be taken from their original context and "accommodated" to a new situation. This accommodation is, however, not a pure accommodation, that is, the author does not place upon his Old Testament quotations meanings which they were never intended to bear, because the harmony between the two testaments, which God has pre-ordained, assures us that the Old Testament was intended to be understood in the light of the revelation of Jesus Christ. Van der Ploeg applies this interpretation to the quotation from Ps. 2:7. Although the psalmist was thinking of an adoptive sonship, so he explains, the author used these words to express the real sonship of Christ, which is a "new" sense of the psalmist's words although in complete accord with them. It would seem, then, that the typological interpretation, by emphasizing the analogy between the historic kings and the Messianic King, stresses the unity of thought between the Old and New Testaments whereas the "sensus plenior" interpretation emphasizes the diversity of thought between them. This is confirmed by the similarity of this latter interpretation to the accommodation theory and by its use of the term "surpassing"<sup>23</sup> to denote the relationship of

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<sup>23</sup>Spicq, *op. cit.*, I, 343, states that "Hébr. entent cette filiation au sens propre et dépasse, par conséquent, la teneur originale du texte."

the meaning of the quotation to its original context.

The prophecy of Nathan as found in 2 Sam. 7:14 was never applied to the Messiah in Judaic literature. This is the conclusion of Strack and Billerbeck.<sup>24</sup> Van der Ploeg<sup>25</sup> suggests that this should not surprise us because of the words, "when he commits iniquity, I will chasten him" which are found in the immediate context of the promise.

This prophecy, however, is generally recognized by Christian expositors to be messianic. Most of them interpret its messianic import typologically, that is, as an example of finding in what was immediately to occur the root and promise of what was to be hereafter. The promise does not refer exclusively to an individual whether this be Solomon or Christ, but to all of David's seed including Christ.

There is no need, says Fairbairn, for that alternating process . . . by which this one part is made to refer to Solomon and his immediate successors, and that other to Christ. The prophecy is to be taken as an organic whole . . . and is to be regarded as a general promise of the connection of the kingdom with David's person and line, including Christ as belonging to that line after the flesh; but in respect to the element of eternity . . . it not only admitted but required the possession of a nature in Christ higher unspeakably than He could derive from David.<sup>26</sup>

While it is generally true that the prophecy is an organic whole, the mention of the threat of punishment to the king who commits iniquity can only apply to him who is the type of Christ and not to Christ Himself.

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<sup>24</sup>Strack and Billerbeck, op. cit., III, 677.

<sup>25</sup>Van der Ploeg, "L'exégèse de l'Ancien Testament dans l'Épître aux Hébreux," op. cit., p. 200.

<sup>26</sup>Fairbairn, op. cit., I, 125-126.

Owen<sup>27</sup> explains that he who is a type of Christ may morally fail in the performance of his duty even in those things in which he was a type, and, as a result, something in the prophecy may belong to him in a personal capacity alone, and not to his antitype. Spicq,<sup>28</sup> who substantially agrees with this typological explanation of this quotation, avoids the problem raised against the messianic interpretation by the reference to the punishment of the wicked king by suggesting that the author of Hebrews took his quotations from the parallel account in Chronicles where it is omitted. He explains this reference in the account in 2 Samuel as the interpolation of a later scribe who altered the account in the light of David's unfaithful successors. Thus, the account in Chronicles from which our author took his quotation, according to Spicq, is more faithful than the account in 2 Samuel to the original revelation.

Van der Floeg,<sup>29</sup> in reference to this text, speaks of the "sensus plenior." He maintains that, while the literal sense of these words applies only to Solomon, our author is nevertheless justified in using them in an other than literal sense so as to apply to Christ by virtue of the divinely pre-established harmony between the Old and New Testaments.

The Song of Moses, from which our author took his third quotation,

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<sup>27</sup>Owen, op. cit., XII, 142.

<sup>28</sup>Spicq, op. cit., I, 342-343.

<sup>29</sup>Van der Floeg, "L'exégèse de l'Ancien Testament dans l'Epître aux Hébreux," op. cit., pp. 200-201.

pictures the whole of Israel's history to the end of days, at which time Jehovah appears for judgment and receives universal homage. Because the  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta$  of the quotation refers to Jehovah and not to the Messiah, the question may be legitimately raised: "By what principle did our author interpret this phrase messianically?" The principle of Vaihinger<sup>30</sup> that all which was spoken of Jehovah could with equal propriety be attributed to the Messiah is inadequate. Some suppose that our author was misled by the mention of  $\kappa\upsilon\pi\sigma\varsigma$  in line d.2. of verse 43, but, as Delitzsch<sup>31</sup> correctly points out from Heb. 8:8 and 12:6, our author by no means always understands  $\kappa\upsilon\pi\sigma\varsigma$  in the Old Testament to signify the Christ. Of course, no typological approach is possible here. The true explanation, as mentioned earlier,<sup>32</sup> is that because Christ is Jehovah manifest in the flesh, whatever is said in the Old Testament of the final appearance of Jehovah in glory is also applicable to Christ. Or, to speak in terms of the "sensus plenior" of the text of Deut. 32:43, the author of Hebrews brings to light the "sensus plenior," which is an other than literal sense of these words, through the knowledge which he possesses of the appearance of the Messiah.

Strack and Billerbeck<sup>33</sup> assure us that the messianic interpretation of Psalm 45, from which our author made his fifth quotation, is found

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<sup>30</sup>Franz Delitzsch, Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, translated from the German by Thomas L. Kingsbury (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952), I, 71, alludes to Vaihinger's principle.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>32</sup>Supra, p. 52.

<sup>33</sup>Strack and Billerbeck, op. cit., III, 679.

among the rabbis. The Targum is its main representative. Other rabbis, however, interpreted the Psalm as speaking of Solomon, Moses, Aaron, or the Son of Qorah.

The various ways of understanding the messianic implication of this quotation arise from the different interpretations given to the phrase  $\delta \theta\rho\acute{o}\nu\alpha\varsigma \sigma\omicron\upsilon \delta \theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ . Some have connected these words in a subject-predicate relationship so as to make them read either "God is thy throne, that is, thy kingdom is founded upon God," or "Thy throne is God, that is, divine," or "Thy throne [is the throne of] God." Those who argue for either of these interpretations support their claims in general by three main arguments; (a) Earthly rulers could hardly have been called "God" in the proper sense; (b) If the reading  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$  in  $\tau\tilde{\eta}\varsigma \beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$  be adopted, the  $\delta \theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$  would most naturally refer to God Himself and not to the one who occupies the throne; (c) The point of the argument in the quotation in Hebrews is not that the Son is called God but that the Son has a throne and an eternal dominion. On these grounds, then, Ps. 45:6,7 would refer to the Messiah typically, that is, the description of the king of Judah would have been made in terms of the true and perfect conception of his office.

The term  $\delta \theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$  may also be taken as a vocative. Rendall,<sup>34</sup> following the tradition of the Targum, considers the  $\delta \theta\rho\acute{o}\nu\alpha\varsigma \sigma\omicron\upsilon \delta \theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$  as an interjectional appeal to God, and so avoids the problem that an Israelite king seems to have been called by the divine name. He argues

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<sup>34</sup>Frederic Rendall, The Epistle to the Hebrews in Greek and English with Critical and Explanatory Notes (London: Macmillan & Company, 1883), pp. 14-15.



that the point of the argument in Hebrews is not that the Son is called God, but that God His Father makes Him a throne which will stand forever. Gunkel<sup>35</sup> also takes the  $\delta \Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$  as a vocative but does not deny that it was addressed as a divine title to the Jewish ruler. He understands the title to be a true ascription of divinity to the king and explains it as the sole survival of a custom, which was common among the nations surrounding Israel, of deifying the rulers. He states: "Veneration of kings as gods was not rare in the ancient East; we are not surprised, therefore, that such a declaration meets us just once on the lips of an Israelitish singer."<sup>36</sup> Hugo Gressmann<sup>37</sup> modifies this view by saying that such veneration was never intended to be taken literally, that is, as a real ascription of divinity to the king. He claims that it was merely the language of court-flattery which was general oriental custom. More plausible is the view expounded by Delitzsch in his Commentary on the Psalms where he admits that the kings of Israel were addressed as  $\text{דָּבָרִים}$  although in some lower sense of the word. He states:

Since elsewhere earthly authorities are called  $\text{דָּבָרִים}$ , Ex. 21:6; 22:7; Ps. 82, because they are God's representatives and the bearers of His image upon earth, so the king who is celebrated in this Psalm may be all the more readily styled Elohim, when in his heavenly beauty, his irresistible doxa or glory, and his divine holiness, he seems to the psalmist to be the perfected realization of the close relationship in which God has set David and his seed

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<sup>35</sup>Hermann Gunkel, Ausgewählte Psalmen (n.p., 1911), pp. 106f.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 106.

<sup>37</sup>Hugo Gressmann, Der Ursprung der israelitisch-judischen Eschatologie (n.p., 1905), pp. 255-256.

to Himself.<sup>38</sup>

From this point of view we would say that the Son in Hebrews 1 is properly called God in the words addressed in a lower sense to the Israelite kings just as he is called Son in the real sense in the words of Ps. 2:7 which speak only of the adoptive sonship of earthly kings. But, Delitzsch's messianic interpretation of this Psalm in his Commentary on Hebrews<sup>39</sup> differs from, and is still more plausible than, the one just given. There, while still interpreting the  $\delta \theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$  as a vocative, he denies that the psalmist meant to address a merely human king as  $\text{אֱלֹהִים}$  because never once, he explains, is an individual king called "God" although it is true that ruling powers collectively are so entitled. He interprets, then, the  $\delta \theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma \sigma\omicron\upsilon \delta \theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$  in the Psalm as a "prophetic presentiment" which results from the fact that the psalmist, in composing a hymn about a historic king of Judah, transferred to him the long existent hope of the divine world-savior. That this hope was actually at the center of Israel's eschatology is ably shown not only by Delitzsch but also by Sellin<sup>40</sup> and by Warfield.<sup>41</sup> So then, the vocative  $\delta \theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$  is most probably to be taken as a prophetic element in a Psalm

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<sup>38</sup>Delitzsch, Commentary on the Psalms, translated from the second edition of the German by F. Bolton (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1959), II, 83.

<sup>39</sup>Delitzsch, Commentary on the Epistle to Hebrews, I, 79.

<sup>40</sup>Sellin's views have been given to the readers of The Princeton Theological Review, XI (October, 1913), 630-649 by J. Oscar Boyd under the title of "The Source of Israel's Eschatology."

<sup>41</sup>Benjamin B. Warfield, Christology and Criticism (New York: Oxford University Press, 1929), pp. 19-28.

otherwise addressed to a certain Israelite king at the time of his marriage.

Although Strack and Billerbeck do not cite any specific evidence for the messianic interpretation of Ps. 102 by the ancient rabbis, Bacon does give some evidence for the fact that already in pre-Christian times this Psalm was "a favorite resort of those who sought for proof-texts of the messianic eschatology."<sup>42</sup> Moreover, most commentators recognize that this Psalm is pervaded with the messianic hope of the restoration of Zion (vv. 13,16) and of the creation of a new people (vv. 15,18,21, 22), so that its messianic import can scarcely be doubted.

The precise sense, however, in which verses 25-27, which in the Hebrew text are addressed to Jehovah, may be applied to the Messiah, is not quite as certain. Hofmann<sup>43</sup> virtually denies any messianic sense to these verses by claiming that the author did not mean to apply the *κύριε* to Christ but merely meant to express the faith to which he had arrived on other grounds in Old Testament language. But, it may be answered, isn't the author quoting the Old Testament to find there the source of his doctrines? Doesn't he use the Old Testament authoritatively? Others suggest that our author was misled by the *κύριε* of the Septuagint. Not only was he in error, they say, in supposing that wherever the Septuagint has *κύριος* the Messiah is intended (a supposition which the

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<sup>42</sup>B. W. Bacon, "Hebrews 1:10-12 and the Septuagint Rendering of Psalm 102:23," Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, III (1902), 284.

<sup>43</sup>J. Chr. K. von Hofmann, Der Schriftbeweis (Nördlingen: n.p., 1852), I, 148.

author does not have, as shown in connection with Deut. 32:43) but also in failing to realize that the *κύριε* of the Septuagint is an addition not found in the original Hebrew text. That the *κύριε* of the Septuagint is not an unwarranted addition, however, may be shown by the following reasons: (a) The same *σὺ κύριε* of verse 25 is found in verse 12, and in both instances the psalmist is addressing Jehovah who endures to all generations; (b) The *κύριε* was probably supplied in correspondence to the omission of the divine name *יְהוָה* in verse 24. Thus, the *κύριε* of the Septuagint does not introduce a new interpretation into the Psalm. Bacon<sup>44</sup> explains the use of these verses to prove the Creatorship of the Messiah as a mistranslation or a misinterpretation of verses 22 and 23 by the Septuagint translators. The Hebrew of these verses is rendered thus:

He has broken my strength in mid-course;  
 he has shortened my days.  
 "O my God," I say, "take me not hence  
 in the midst of my days,  
 thou whose years endure  
 throughout all generations!"

He suggests that these verses were not correctly understood by the Septuagint translators as a complaint of the psalmist at the brevity of his days which are cut off in the midst, but rather incorrectly as Jehovah's answer to the psalmist's plea that He would come to save Zion. The psalmist, according to the Septuagint translators, was told by Jehovah to acknowledge the brevity of His set time and not to summon Him when it

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<sup>44</sup>Bacon, "Hebrews 1:10-12 and the Septuagint Rendering of Psalm 102: 23," op. cit., pp. 282-283.

is but half expired. Moreover, the psalmist is promised that he and his posterity would endure perpetually. Bacon shows that this interpretation of verses 22 and 23 is based on only three small changes of the Hebrew text: (a)  $\text{אָנָּוִי}$  is taken in the sense of "answer" instead of "afflict"; (b)  $\text{אֲנִי}$  is supplied from the kethibh  $\text{אָנִי}$  whereas the Hebrew follows the Qere  $\text{אָנִי}$ ; (c) The  $\text{אָמַר אֲנִי}$  which is taken by the Masoretes to mean "I said, O my God" is interpreted by the Septuagint as "tell unto me" in the sense of "acknowledge me" and is connected with the preceding "the shortness of my days" instead of with the following "take me not hence" as in the Hebrew. The verses 22 and 23 in the Septuagint thus read as follows:

$\text{ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ ἐν ὁσμῇ ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ}$   
 $\text{τὴν βλιγύτη τῶν ἡμερῶν μου ἀνάγγελόν μου}$   
 $\text{μη ἀναγάγῃς με ἐν ἡμίσει ἡμερῶν μου}$   
 $\text{ἐν γενεᾷ γενεῶν τὰ ἔτη σου}$

In this manner Bacon explains how an accepted Messianic Psalm could be made to prove the doctrine that the Messiah is none other than the pre-existent Wisdom through whom God made the worlds. However, the words, taken in the Hebrew text as a complaint of the psalmist, can just as readily be made to prove the Creatorship of Christ as the Septuagint interpretation. This can be done in either of two ways. The logic of the author of Hebrews may run as follows: "The Psalm presents Jehovah, the Creator of heaven and earth, who will redeem his people, and, since the Messiah is the one through whom Jehovah will reveal His redemption, the Messiah is also the eternal Creator." Or, perhaps the messianic character of Ps. 102:25-27 is to be explained as follows: "Christ had said

that before the world, He was with God; therefore, everything said in the Old Testament of the eternity of God must also be applicable to Him." In either case, the Hebrew text of Ps. 102:25-27 is just as legitimately applied to the Messiah as the Septuagint of these verses.

It is uncertain whether or not Psalm 110, from which the author of Hebrews made the last quotation of his series, was ever recognized as messianic by the Jews. The ancient Midrash, Delitzsch<sup>45</sup> notes, applied the Psalm either to David or to Abraham, but, he continues, its messianic interpretation does peep out at several passages in this Midrash. Most probably, then, this Psalm was universally recognized as messianic by the Jews of Christ's time, but, as a result of the large use which the Christians made of it, they abandoned it.<sup>46</sup>

The numerous quotations of this Psalm in the New Testament abundantly testify to its messianic interpretation by the Christians. The only question that might be raised is: "Is the Psalm typically or prophetically messianic?" The answer depends on whether or not it is admitted that a historic king of Judah could ever have been openly addressed as priest. Spicq<sup>47</sup> supposes that he could have and that, therefore, this Psalm was addressed to David as typical of the greater King-Priest; whereas van der Ploeg<sup>48</sup> denies it and speaks rather of the Psalm

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<sup>45</sup>Delitzsch, Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, I, 86.

<sup>46</sup>This is also the conclusion of van der Ploeg, "L'exégèse de l'Ancien Testament dans l'Épître aux Hébreux," op. cit., p. 207.

<sup>47</sup>Spicq, op. cit., II, 21.

<sup>48</sup>Van der Ploeg, "L'exégèse de l'Ancien Testament dans l'Épître aux Hébreux," op. cit., pp. 207-208.

as being directly prophetic. According to Spicq, the situation of this Psalm was fully realized in David after the capture of Jerusalem from the Jebusite sheikhs to whose religious prerogatives he succeeded (2 Sam. 5:4-10). However, this situation does not account for the Melchizedekian reference in the Psalm. It seems preferable to speak of the prophetic character of the Psalm for the following reasons: (a) No king was ever called a priest although as head of a priestly nation (Ex. 19:6) he had a priestly character; (b) According to the New Testament, David speaks directly and objectively of the Anointed One (Matt. 22:41f); (c) The last words of David in 2 Samuel 32:1-7 prove that we need not be surprised to find a directly Messianic Psalm coming from his lips. This prophetic interpretation is not to deny a connection of this Psalm with contemporaneous history. For prophecy never seems wholly to forsake the ground of history, but finds in contemporary history the impulse for its utterance. Perhaps the historical background from which David objectively speaks of the Messiah was the incident of the bringing of the ark, the earthly throne of Jehovah, to Zion, at which time David took his seat as it were in the place of honor at Jehovah's right hand. It may have been the impulse of this occasion which led David to look forward to the true King-Priest of whom he was but a servant (my Lord).

In conclusion there appears to be no reason for supposing that the argument of the author of Hebrews in chapter one of his epistle has lost its relevancy for Christians of the twentieth century. If it is acknowledged that the Old Testament is a book of promise and that Jesus is the fulfillment of this promise, then one should not be surprised to find

that our author points out this supernatural relationship by interpreting as messianic passages which do not immediately appear to be addressed to the Messiah. Moreover, the principles of selection, which seem to underlie the author's use of the Old Testament, are completely sober and logical. However, we need not assume that our author was clearly conscious of the different messianic senses which later theologians have distinguished, and, in consequence, we are not always obliged to choose between them. But, if we would make this choice for the quotations in the first chapter of Hebrews we might say that Psalm 2:7 and Psalm 110:1 are direct prophecies of the Messiah from the vantage point of the typical kings of Judah, that Deuteronomy 32:43 and Psalm 102:25-27 refer to the Messiah because He is Jehovah manifest in the flesh, that 2 Samuel 7:14 refers to Christ typologically and that Psalm 45:6,7 is a "prophetic presentiment" of the Messiah in a Psalm which is otherwise addressed to a specific king of Judah.



## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS

It remains to review the principal conclusions reached in this study. We noted, in the first chapter, that the quotations of this epistle were taken exclusively from the Septuagint, probably from a Septuagint manuscript which is closely related to our present Septuagint manuscripts. From the formulas of citation and from the way in which the author elaborates his doctrines from the Old Testament and applies them to his readers, we noticed that the author held the Old Testament to be God's living Word. In the same chapter we remarked that the purpose of the author in quoting the Old Testament was less apologetic than didactic, that the unifying factor of the seven quotations is the Heavenly Companion theme, that the angels were introduced because of the role they had in the giving of the law at Sinai, and that the quotations are arranged in a chiasmic structure of two contrasts, followed by a conclusion. In the second chapter which was a textual study of these quotations, we concluded that the citations were carefully chosen from some A type manuscript which was not far different from our present A manuscripts. We enlarged upon this conclusion in the third chapter where we discovered that this A type manuscript also had some affinities with the Lucian recension, the codex Ambrosianus, and the codex Vaticanus. We also noted that even if Kahle's more recent theory of the Septuagint were shown to be correct, it could still be maintained that the author used a manuscript which was not much different from the codex

A. In the last chapter which was a study of the different messianic senses of the Old Testament, we noted that the author was less concerned in distinguishing clearly between the literal, typical, typico-prophetic, and "sensus plenior" interpretation of the Old Testament than in showing from the Old Testament what the characteristics of the Messiah really were. His arguments from the Old Testament, we concluded, were as relevant to Christians of our day as to those in the apostolic age.

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