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Are We Using Our Septuagint?

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must have interest for any one who delights in religious poetry. Take for example the Song of the Three Holy Children. Certainly the writer of this song must have been acquainted with Psalm 146, of which it is an echo. There is glow, uplifting power, and rich devotion in its verse. Or take as another specimen the description of wisdom, Wisdom of Solomon, 7, 22; 8, 1, of which Dr. Westcott once said: "This magnificent description of wisdom must rank among the noblest passages of human eloquence." The distinctive feature of the apocryphal books as literature, if not also as religious thought, will be found in the gnomic books, the Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus. In gnomic poetry the Hebrew literature is especially rich, for the Hebrew language enables pithy sentences to be concentrated into a few pregnant words. In Ecclesiasticus will be found also specimens of a grim humor and biting irony, of which the following examples may be pointed out: the itch of the scandal-monger to tell his tale (9, 10—12), the folly of the man that "buildeth his house with other men's money" (21, 8). Who cannot appreciate the wit in this: "A slip on the pavement is better than a slip with the tongue"?

This will go to show that the apocryphal books do have a place as valuable reading even for the busy and overworked pastor of to-day. Nothing should ever be done to create the impression that they are put on the same level with the canonical books. But now that modern research has shed much additional light on the apocryphal era in connection with the study of New Testament background, a repeated perusal of these books will be of great value to us pastors.

An interesting and profitable course of lectures might grow out of a study of the apocryphal books. Such a course would treat of the history of the books themselves; of the history of the Jewish nation between the Old and the New Testament; of the essential difference between these books and the inspired writings; of the origin and rise of the religious parties, or sects, Pharisees and Sadducees; of the development of rabbinic Judaism, etc.

Valparaiso, Ind.

H. H. KUMNICK.

Are We Using Our Septuagint?

The Septuagint challenges our interest from practically every angle from which we may approach its study. Its *history*, which for centuries was the subject of strange speculations, has only recently been cleared of the accumulation of these theories. Shorn of these mythical accretions, the story of the Septuagint may be reduced to the following facts. The instigation came from Ptolemy Philadelphus, King of Egypt, ca. 283—247 B. C., who desired a translation of the Jewish holy books for the great library founded by his father. The work was not done at one time, as has been stated, much less by a

group of exactly seventy-two learned Jews, but in the course of approximately a century and a half, one of the chief men concerned being Jesus ben-Sira. As Ottley remarks (*A Handbook of the Septuagint*, 35): "By 100 B. C. or thereabouts the Greek Bible must have been nearly complete." Just before that he remarks: "We may believe, then, without hesitation, that the Law, the Pentateuch, with which alone Aristeas is concerned, was translated at Alexandria, probably within fifty years of the date indicated in the 'Letter' [namely, that of Aristeas to Philocrates, on which the ancient narrative is based]. The translation of the remaining books followed, bit by bit, during the next century and a half. In some cases one book of a group may have been translated first, as I Kingdoms among the historical books or Isaiah among the prophets; or again, some separate passages, used as lessons in the synagog, may have been first interpreted when these lessons were read, then committed to writing, and later used as instalments of the translations of those books in which they occur. Various hands would of course be employed in the work, as it extended over several generations; and the books which do not belong to the Hebrew Old Testament, whether original or translated, were added, from time to time, to the Alexandrian collection." If we wish to stay more closely with the traditional view, we may assume, with the editor of the Bagster Septuagint, that the Septuagint version had been commenced prior to the year 285 B. C. "and that in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus [283—247] either the books in general or at least an important part of them had been completed." This still permits us to assume that the work was not definitely completed until approximately 150 B. C.

A second point of interest which really amounts to a problem is the question of *the manuscripts from which the translation was made*. It was presumably made from the best available copies of the Hebrew Old Testament, either from manuscripts obtained in Jerusalem for this particular purpose or from such manuscripts as were contained in the great library at Alexandria. And here one of the greatest difficulties is connected with the fact that the Septuagint in various places has sections which are not found in the standard Hebrew text as we now have it. The Bagster editor has the following paragraph on this question: "In examining the Pentateuch of the Septuagint in connection with the Hebrew text and with the copies preserved by the Samaritans in their crooked letters, it is remarkable that in very many passages the readings of the Septuagint accord with the Samaritan copies where they differ from the Jewish. We cannot here notice the various theories which have been advanced to account for this accordance of the Septuagint with the Samaritan copies of the Hebrew; indeed, it is not very satisfactory to enter into the details of the subject because no theory hitherto brought forward explains *all*

the facts or meets *all* the difficulties. To one point, however, we will advert because it has not been sufficiently taken into account,— in the places in which the Samaritan and Jewish copies of the Hebrew text differ in *important and material points*, the Septuagint accords *much more* with the Jewish than with the Samaritan copies, and in a good many points it introduces variations unknown to either." An explanation which would agree with the psychology of the situation and fully satisfy the conservative Bible scholar is this, that the Alexandrian translators added the Samaritan expansions of the authentic Hebrew text to their translation in order to have all the glosses and explanatory material complete. The careful reader of the Septuagint who compares every section with the original will readily see the difference in content and tone of the text. Nevertheless this is one of the difficulties which further work in a scientific study of the Septuagint will attempt to solve. Fortunately the quotations from the Septuagint in the New Testament are not appreciably involved in this problem. The difficulty does not include the versions of Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, and Hesychius, and the recension of Origen, except as certain emendations of the text of the Septuagint may have crept into some copies.

Another interesting feature which challenges the attention of every student of the Septuagint is the fact that the *variety of translators* naturally resulted in a very unequal character of the version. Some books bear evidence of the fact that the men who attempted their translation were by no means equal to the task, while others indicate that the work was very capably performed. Most scholars agree that the Pentateuch was very well executed, while Job and the Book of Isaiah show the very opposite. It is evident from the outset that the men who did the work were learned Jews, who, moreover, were filled with the most profound respect for the holy writings. In other words, they adhered to the traditional understanding of the Scriptures as they had been taught. They did not consciously inject into their translation any views they may have held for their own persons; they attempted to offer an objective translation. Therefore any inaccuracies and inadequacies in the text are not to be ascribed to dishonest intentions on the part, but simply to the incompetency of some of the translators, whether as to exact knowledge of many of the Hebrew terms or a failure on their part to find Greek words and expressions which would adequately convey the sense of the original. "One difficulty which they had to overcome was that of introducing theological ideas, which till then had their proper terms only in Hebrew, into a language of Gentiles, which till then had terms for no religious notions except those of heathens. Hence the necessity of using words and phrases in new and appropriated senses."

The *language* of the Septuagint is *Greek*, a fact which is closely associated with the conquest of the greater part of Asia and a large part of Northern Africa by Alexander the Great between 334 and 323 B. C. Yet it is *not the so-called classical Greek*, that written by the authors of the Golden Age of Greek literature, but the post-Attic Greek in the Alexandrine idiom. (Cp. "Notes on the Greek of the Septuagint and the New Testament," in *Theological Quarterly*, Oct., 1920.) One might well call it the Greek as developed in the University of Alexandria, one which might well bear the designation "the written *Koine*." The most striking phenomena of the Alexandrine dialect are, according to the article just referred to: the blending, fusion, simplification of verb inflection as to the preterit tenses, especially in the fusion of the first and second aorist; the emphatic duplication of the verb in prediction, warning, etc., as in the Hebrew; the iteration for the relative; the breaking down of the exact use of prepositions; the luxuriance of articular infinitives in a great multitude of syntactical forms, and other peculiarities. A working knowledge of these phenomena enables the student to grasp the intended meaning of the text with much greater facility.

If the Septuagint carries no other appeal to the average pastor, it challenges his attention on account of the quotations from it included in the New Testament, which are usually given as 215, with 32 in Matthew, 36 in Romans, and 33 in Hebrews alone. The problems associated with these quotations are not beyond solution; but they do require careful study, partly on account of their form, partly on account of their content. We have but to think of Matt. 2, 15 and 23 to realize that the Lutheran theologian must be sure of his ground. Or take the example of Matt. 1, 23. In a recent article on the "History of the Septuagint Text" we read: "In the frequent disputations that took place between the Jews and the Christians the latter often made quotations from the LXX which the former could not regard as conclusive. These were, in part, concerned with inaccurate translations, of which a well-known example is the rendering of עלמה, Is. 7, 14, by *παρθένος*, which has been ever recurring in all polemical writings against the Jews." It seems strange to find such a concession in a Protestant discussion of the Isaiah passage, especially in view of the fact that the Holy Ghost has sanctioned the translation of *παρθένος* in Matt. 1, 23. But similar problems await the student in scores of other passages quoted in the New Testament from the Septuagint. It is not merely that one must be sure of his actual translation of a given passage, but he ought to have the full background of the context also in the Old Testament, both in the Hebrew and in the Greek. In other words, a working knowledge of the Septuagint is practically indispensable for scientific work in both the Old and the New Testament.

The number of manuscripts of the Septuagint is not very great if compared with the manuscripts of the New Testament, but the list nevertheless presents a formidable array. There are approximately thirty codices in uncials, about half of which are complete. Among these Codex B, the Vaticanus, of the fourth century, now in the Vatican Library in Rome, supposed to be one of the fifty copies which Constantine deputed Eusebius to have prepared at Caesarea, Codex S (or Σ), the Sinaiticus, found by Tischendorf in 1844 at St. Catherine's Convent on Mount Sinai, formerly in Leningrad, now in London, and Codex A, the Alexandrinus, which was brought to England after the accession of Charles I, are considered the most authentic and valuable, and they are basic in all recent editions of the Greek version. There are more than one hundred cursives of the Septuagint, thirty of which were regarded as important enough to be considered in the Cambridge Septuagint. The poetical books are found in about 180 cursives, and of these about 130 are Psalters or contain little else, except sometimes the canticles or hymns.

Of greater interest to the average Bible student are the printed editions of the Septuagint, as they are available partly in the libraries of universities and of large cities, partly in private libraries of specialists in the field. We merely refer to the Septuagint text contained in the *Complutensian Polyglot*, published in 1521, at Alcalá, near Madrid, the *Aldine* edition, printed after, but published before, the Complutensian, in February, 1518, and the *Sistine* edition, published at Rome in 1587, under Pope Sixtus V, because these editions are accessible to the scholar in only a few libraries. The situation is not much better with regard to the edition begun by Johannes Ernst Grabe, who himself finished two volumes before his death, in 1712, and whose work was completed by Francis Lee and George Wigan (1719 and 1720); for this edition is also rare. More accessible to the average scholar in the field are the great editions by Holmes and Parsons (the *Oxford Edition: Vetus Testamentum Graece*, edd. Holmes et Parsons, *Oxonii 1798—1827*) and that by Brooke, McLean, and Thackeray (the *Cambridge Edition: The Old Testament in Greek according to the Text of the Codex Vaticanus*, supplemented from other uncial manuscripts, with a critical apparatus containing the variants of the chief ancient authorities for the text of the Septuagint). Not quite beyond the reach of the less opulent individual scholar is the Septuagint edition furnished by H. B. Swete (*The Old Testament in Greek*, Cambridge, 3 vols.; first edition, 1887—94). This was, till recently, the best edition for general desk use. In Germany we have the Goettinger Septuagint (*Septuaginta, Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Societatis Literarum Gottingensis editum*), of which Volume IX, fasc. 1, has recently appeared.

In keeping with the question in our caption we are especially

interested in less expensive editions, which are accessible to the average pastor and student in the field. Bagster has issued *The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament, with an English Translation*, the text being eclectic, the Sixtine text being used, with variants of Grabe's text at the beginning or the end of each book, therefore containing hexaplar matter, but not marked as such. The translation was prepared by Launcelot Charles Lee Brenton. This is a handy volume for comparison and will serve for cursory reading and quick reference work.

But the edition of the Septuagint to which we want to call particular attention is that which was recently issued by the Privilegierte Wuerttembergische Bibelanstalt in Stuttgart (*Septuaginta, id est, Vetus Testamentum Graece iuxta LXX Interpretes, edidit Alfred Rahlfs*). This edition combines scientific accuracy and completeness with inexpensiveness and should therefore have a strong appeal for every student of the Bible who knows any Greek, no matter how little. The text of this edition is based mainly upon Codex B, or the Vaticanus, Codex N or S, the Sinaiticus, and Codex A, or Alexandrinus, thereby offering a combination of the best sources available. The work of the editor has been done with painstaking and scientific care and exhibits a scholarship which will bear comparison with that of the foremost workers in the field. The name of Alfred Rahlfs is a guarantee of this statement, and the Stuttgart Septuagint represents the culmination of his life-work. On April 1, 1935, he signed the preface, and on April 8 he died. His name will always be connected with the chapter on Septuagint research; for since the death of Lagarde, his teacher, he was the foremost German scholar in this field. And the Stuttgart Septuagint will be the visible monument of his life-work, which will keep his name alive in the field of theology and in the Church for decades, if not longer.

As the name of Rahlfs guarantees a production of superior merit from the standpoint of collating and editing, so the name of the institution that had the courage to publish the two-volume edition in this splendid form guarantees an excellent production so far as print and mechanical details are concerned. The type, both in the text proper and in the footnotes, is clear; the paper is strong and smooth, but not glossy; the binding leaves nothing to be desired. And the price of twelve marks for the two bound volumes is surely most reasonable, especially in view of the nature of the work. The Stuttgart Septuagint enables every pastor and every student of theology to devote himself to this great field of theological study. It is true that the value of the Septuagint in the Lutheran Church does not equal that of the Hebrew Old Testament or the Greek New Testament, without which any kind of real study in the text of the Scriptures is impossible. And yet the Septuagint is so closely connected

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with the history of missions in the Church and offers such enormous possibilities in the field of exegesis and textual criticism that a proper appreciation of these fields of study is not possible without this version. The study of the Old Testament without the Septuagint is hardly to be thought of, and that of the New Testament will gain immensely by the constant reference to the many direct and indirect Septuagint quotations. The writers of the New Testament constantly drew upon its vocabulary and its world of ideas, and thus the treasures of a large part of the Septuagint have become the property of the New Testament Church. Let us hope that the time will soon come when the question proposed in the caption of this short discussion will receive a general positive answer; for this will certainly redound in blessings for our Church, both in its evangelistic work and in its inner growth.

P. E. KRETZMANN.

Der Schriftgrund für die Lehre von der satisfactio vicaria.

(Schriftg.)

11. Christus hat die Handschrift getilgt.

Kol. 2, 14 (13b—15): Nachdem er uns alle Übertretungen geschenkt hat, nachdem er ausgelöscht hat die Handschrift, die wider uns war, die durch ihre Sühnungen uns entgegen war, und hat sie aus der Mitte getan dadurch, daß er sie ans Kreuz nagelte, hat er, nachdem er die Fürstentümer und die Obrigkeiten ausgezogen hat, zur Schau gestellt öffentlich, sie zum Triumph machend durch dasselbe.

In dem Passus, der unmittelbar vor diesen Versen steht, hatte Paulus in der zweiten Person geredet, um den Kolossern sonderlich die Bedeutung und den Wert der Taufe deutlich vor die Augen zu führen. In dem uns vorliegenden Satze schließt der Apostel sich mit ein, um die Segnungen, die auch er mit erfahren hat, besonders hervorzuheben und zu betonen.

Subjekt des Satzes ist offenbar Gott, da von ihm unmittelbar vorher gesagt wird, daß er die Christen mit Christo lebendig gemacht hat. Gott hat uns alle Übertretungen geschenkt, sie in Christo, um Christi willen, erlassen, vergeben. In dem Verbum *χαρισάμενος* liegt, wie immer, die Tatsache der freien Gnadengabe Gottes in Christo, die Wahrheit von der einmaligen und völlig hinreichenden Erlösung und Versöhnung, vermöge deren Gott der sündigen Welt die Gesamtschuld erlassen und ihr seine vergebende Gnade wieder zugewandt hat, wie Thomasius schreibt.

Mit diesem Gedanken steht parallel und zugleich auch erklärend die nächste Aussage: nachdem er ausgelöscht hat die Hand-