

Handout #1: The Letter to the Hebrews Lesson 11

There are 10 Old Testament references in this chapter:

Hebrews 10	Old Testament References
1. Hebrews 10:5-7	Psalm 40:6-8 [from the Septuagint Greek translation 39:7-9]
2. Hebrews 10:8-9	1 Samuel 15:22 [from the Septuagint]
3. Hebrews 10:12-13	Psalm 110:1 [possibly from the Septuagint 109:1]*
4. Hebrews 10: 16-17	Jeremiah 31:33-34 [from the Septuagint]
5. Hebrews 10:27	Isaiah 26:11 [from the Septuagint]
6. Hebrews 10:28	Deuteronomy 17:6 [possibly from the Septuagint]*
7. Hebrews 10:29	Exodus 24:8 [possibly from the Septuagint]
8. Hebrews 10:30	Deuteronomy 32:35-42 [possibly from the Septuagint]*
9. Hebrews 10: 37a	Isaiah 26:20 [from the Septuagint]
10. Hebrews 10:37b	Habakkuk 2:3-4 [from the Septuagint]

* no variance between the Septuagint and Massoretic version in this passage

In Hebrews 10:5b-7 the inspired writer quotes directly from the Greek translation of the Old Testament known as the Septuagint [verses Psalm 40:6-8 in some translations, 40:7-9a in others, and in the Septuagint it is Psalm 39:7-9]. You will find that the Old Testament translation of Psalm 40 in your Bible may be different from the Hebrews chapter 10: 5b-7 quotation from the Septuagint. Most recent versions of Bible translations of the Old Testament are taken from the Jewish Massoretic texts dating to the Middle Ages, an Old Testament translation into the Hebrew language based largely from several Greek and Hebrew Old Testament versions. You will notice that significant differences are found in the phrase “but a body you prepared (fashioned) for me” missing in the Massoretic version. The New American Catholic Bible does not provide the variant translation but the New Jerusalem Catholic Bible does record the variant Greek phrase in its footnotes. This is a significant variation since the New Testament writer of Hebrews identifies this passage as a prophecy of the Incarnation and Christ’s submission to the will of the Father in His self-sacrifice:

Massoretic	Septuagint	Hebrews (New American)
<p>40:6-8 <i>Sacrifice and offering you did not want, but you dug ears for me; whole burnt offerings (holocausts) and sin offerings you did not request. Then I said, “Behold, I have come, it is written about me, in the [head of the] scroll of the book. To do your will, O my God, I delight.”</i></p>	<p>39:7-9 <i>Sacrifice and offering you did not want, but you fashioned a body for me; whole burnt offerings (holocausts) and sin offerings you did not request. Then I said, “Behold, I have come, it is written about me in the head of the book [scroll]. To do your will, O my God, I intend..”</i></p>	<p>10:5b-7: <i>Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; holocausts (whole burnt offerings) and sin offerings you took no delight in. Then I said, “As it written of me in the [head of the] scroll, Behold, I come to do you will, O God.”</i></p>

Handout #2: Hebrews chapter 10

All modern translations of the Bible, whether Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish come from a collection of ancient texts. The three most important and reliable versions of the Old Testament are known as the Septuagint [LXX], the officially recognized Old Testament of the Catholic Church; the Massoretic Text [MT], the Jewish Bible; and the Samaritan Pentateuch [SP], which contains the first 5 books of Moses. Prior to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls [DDS] and the Old Testament Bible texts found among those ancient handwritten manuscripts [MSS], copies of these three versions were considered to be the oldest Bible texts in existence.

At the time Jesus lived the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures known as the Septuagint was the principle translation used by the common people. The vast majority of the Old Testament quotations in the New Testament are from this Greek translation. The oldest surviving copies of the Septuagint, which are complete or almost complete manuscripts like the Codex Sinaiticus and the Codex Vaticanus, date to the fourth century AD, while the codex Alexandrinus dates to the fifth century AD.

The Septuagint translation is important to Scripture study for several reasons:

1. Almost all the Bible books it contains were translated from much earlier Hebrew or Aramaic inspired texts that predate Jesus by centuries. This is significant because all other Old Testament translations used in Christian Bibles are copies from later period translations dated after the time of Jesus.
2. The Septuagint translation in certain passages of text differs with the Jewish Massoretic texts in vocabulary and in content. Many of these changes are significant when referring to the promised Messiah.
3. Since it was the sacred Scripture of the Old Covenant prior to the coming of Christ and the most commonly used translation during His ministry, it offers insights into how the Old Covenant people during this time understood and used Scripture.
4. Since it is the most frequently quoted Old Testament text by New Testament inspired writers it constitutes the sacred Old Testament text of the early Christians and reveals the early Church's understanding of Old Testament prophecy.
5. The arrangement of the books of the Septuagint reflect the same four-part arrangement that is found in modern Catholic Bibles: the Pentateuch [first 5 books of Moses], the historical books, the poetry and wisdom books, and the books of the prophets. The Septuagint also includes the 7 books dropped from the Jewish canon in the Middle Ages and by Protestants in the 16th century AD. Catholics refer to these 7 books as the deuterocanonical ["second canon"] texts and Protestants classify them with a group of other non-canonical ancient texts designated as "apocrypha", meaning "hidden".