





**LXX**



# **I. Benefits of Babylonian Captivity**

# Unintended Benefits of Exile

- **Synagogue**
- **Cure for idolatry**
- **Canon**
- **Remnant**

**One of most important: Septuagint (LXX) – Gk. translation of Hebrew OT**



**I. Benefits of Babylonian Captivity**

**II. Between The Testaments**

# That blank page...

- **Mt.1:11-12**
- **Dn.7:6; 8:3-8, 20-22; 11:3ff**
- **Ga.4:4**



**I. Benefits of Babylonian Captivity**

**II. Between The Testaments**

**III. Alexander**

# Most conquerors have little time for 'finer things'

**“Convinced of the superiority of Greek institutions, Alexander spread Hellenism so effectively that it continued to be the dominant pattern of life long after his death and the disintegration of his kingdom”** – Pfeiffer, *OT History*

**Alexander's chief gift to us:  
Greek NT and LXX**



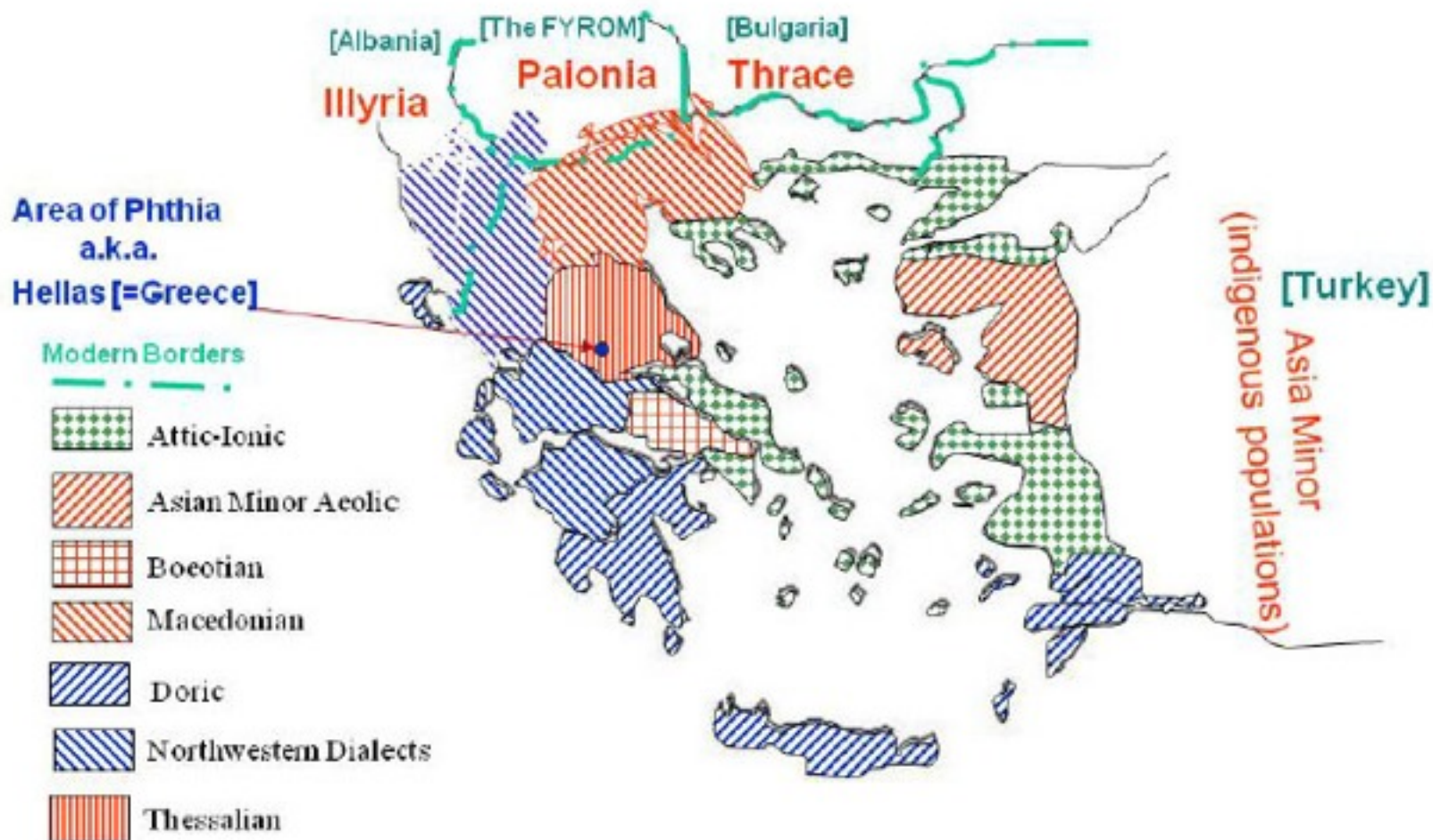
# Hellenistic Greek

- Began w. Alexander's troops who came from all regions of Greece; troops produced a leveling influence
- Became second language of conquered peoples after Alexander's victories
- Lingua franca – hybrid language

# Hellenic Family of Languages

## Hellenic Peninsula – Asia Minor

### Major Dialects - 5th Century B.C.



# **Koinē: *common***

**(Jude 3)**

- **From 330 BC to AD 330**
- **Koinē was at its peak in 1st Cen. BC and 1st Cen. AD**
- **Rome's policy of assimilation allowed Greek to continue to penetrate distant lands – a universal language until at least the end of 1<sup>st</sup> Century**
- **Greek became *simpler***



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# Why a Greek OT?

- Jews in Egypt spoke Greek, not Hebrew
- Letter of Aristeas: 70 (72) Jewish scholars, Alexandria, Egypt
- Pentateuch: about 285 BC

**Autographs are actually inspired;  
good copies, virtually inspired**

- Ac.2:38 (2:5-11, accurate translations)

# Jews: became alienated from LXX

- Made new translations: Aquila; Theodotion; Symmachus (all in 2<sup>nd</sup> Century AD)
- One reason: Is.7:14, *virgin* = Jesus (given by Jewish translators!)

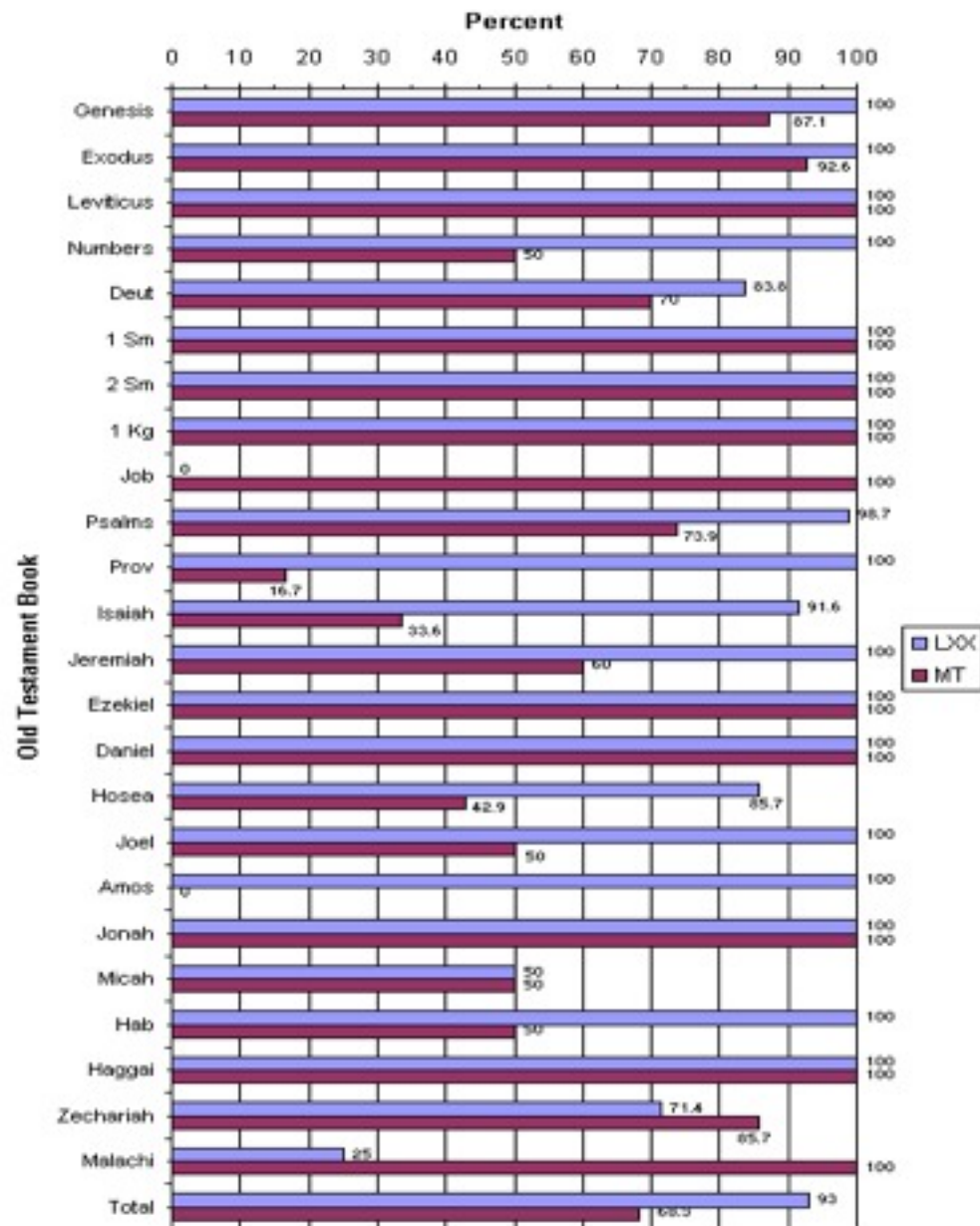
# Why is LXX important?

- First translation of Scriptures. **Koinē**
- LXX: 1000 yrs. older than Hb. MSS
- Majority of NT writers quote LXX  
(approved example of quoting a translation to establish God's will)

1 Pt.2:7  
**LXX**

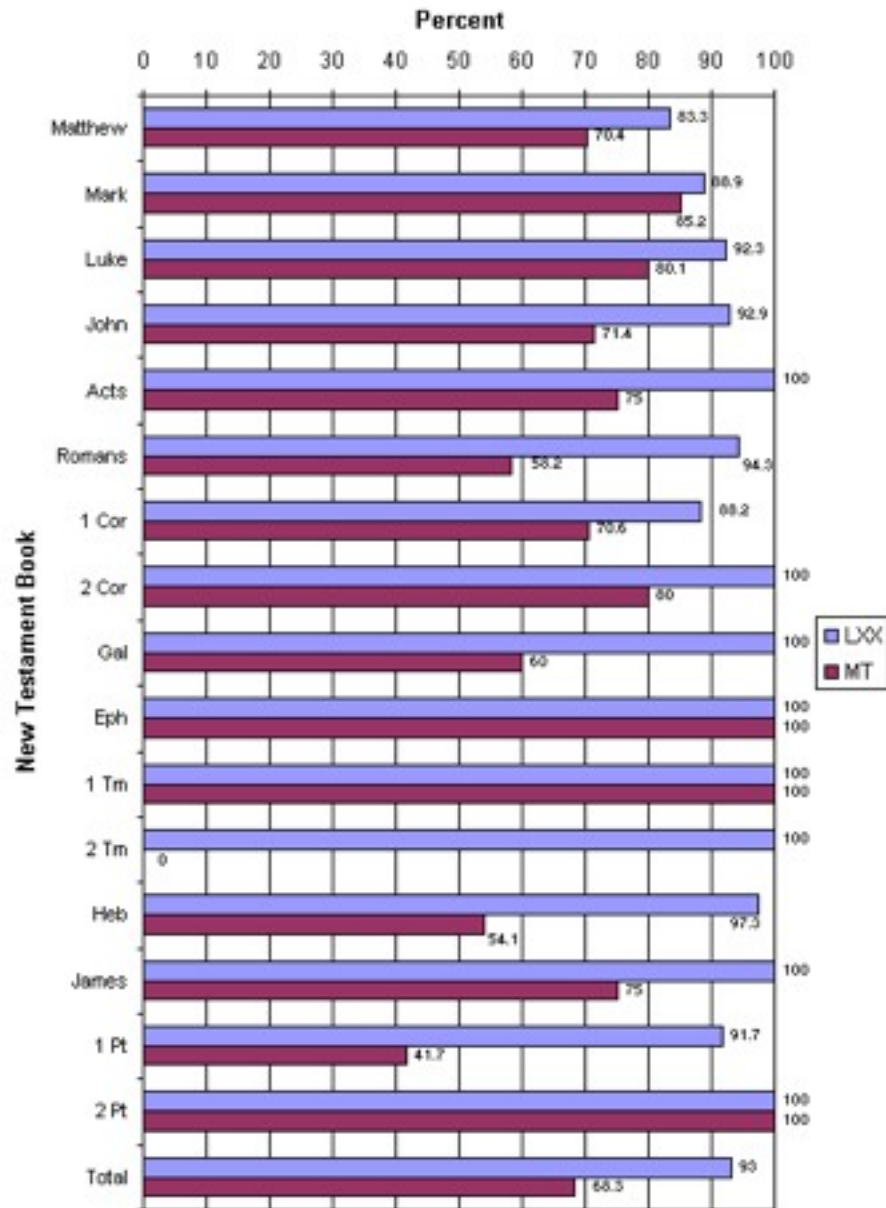
1 Pt.2:8  
**MT**

## Agreement by Old Testament Book (Septuagint versus Hebrew)





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- Influenced NT (content; vocabulary)

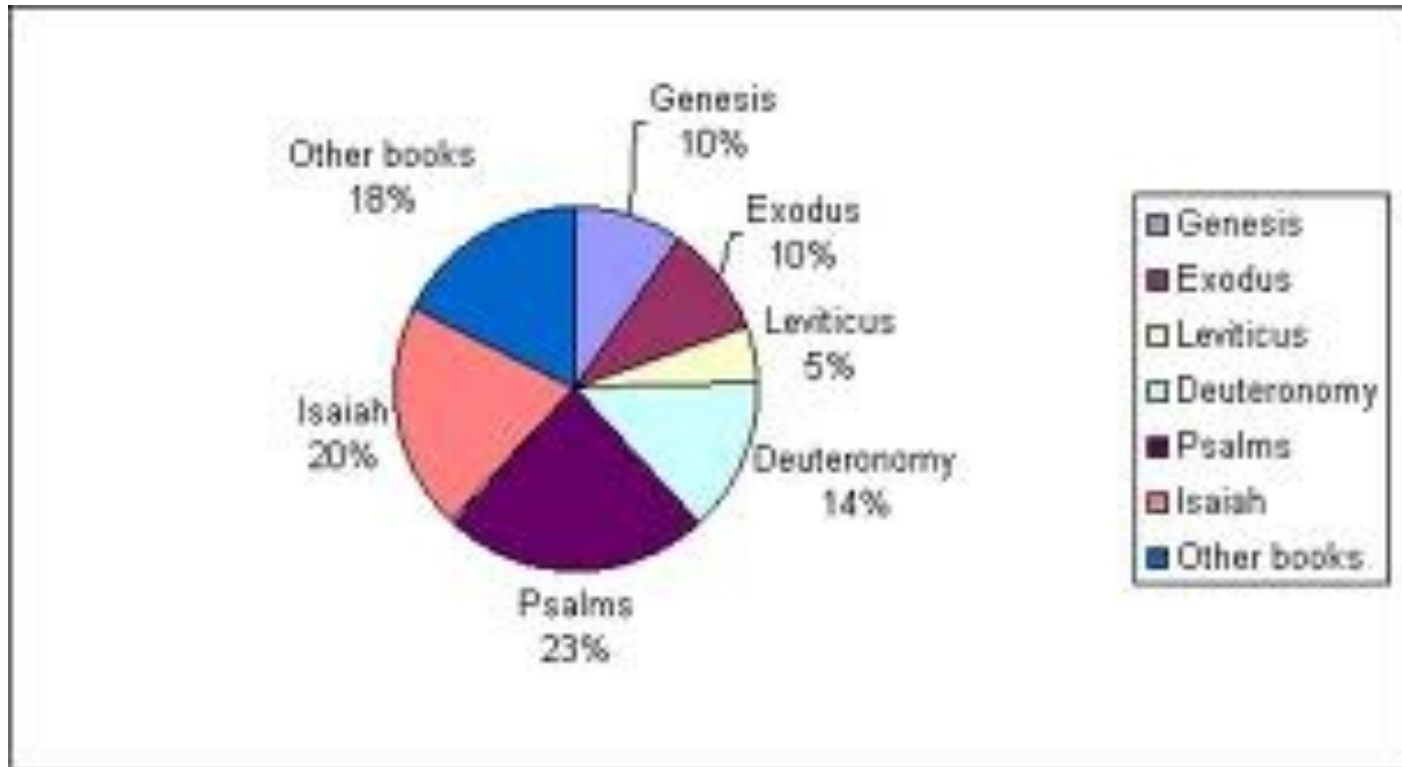
**Dt.21:23, LXX**  
**Perfect tense**

**Ga.3:13 (LXX)**  
**Past tense**

# LXX influenced NT in content & vocabulary

- Augustus and Tiberius scorned the title “Lord”; it contradicted Roman conception of the empire as a republic
  - LXX: “**Lord**” 6000+ times of JHVH
  - NT: In reign of Nero (Ac.25:26) “Lord” increases in frequency in NT as title of **Jesus** (cf. Ph.2:9, 11)

# LXX Books Quoted in NT



# Why is LXX important?

- First translation of Scriptures. Koinē
- LXX: 1000 yrs. older than Hb. MSS
- Majority of NT writers quote LXX
- Influenced NT (content; vocabulary)
- Influenced Vulgate . . . English Bibles
- Helped evangelize world
  - **God-fearers:** OT in own language
  - Ac.8:32-33, LXX
  - Eusebius: **God's providence...**

# Why is LXX important?

- **First translation of Scriptures. Koinē**
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- **Helped evangelize world**
- **Clarifies many NT words. “Church”**
- **Clarifies many OT passages**

# LXX clarifies OT Passages

- Gn.3:15, *seed of woman*
  - LXX: **He**, not *it*
- Is.7:14, **virgin** = Mt.1:23
- Dt.32:43 (quoted in Hb.1:6)
  - *Let all the angels of God worship Him*
  - Lost from Hebrew OT; in LXX / DSS



**I. Benefits of Babylonian Captivity**

**II. Between The Testaments**

**III. Alexander**

**IV. The LXX**

**V. How Accurate Is LXX Text?**



# **Oldest copies of LXX: 4<sup>th</sup> Century AD**

- **Alfred Rahlfs: no reason to assume the text of that period was not in general agreement w. present day LXX text.**
- **Why???**

➤ **Quotations from ancient writers that predate these MSS by 250 years!**

**E.g.: Clement of Rome (AD 95):**

- 1. Quotes entire text of Is.53**
- 2. Quotes Ps.22:6-8**

**Amazing accuracy**

# NT Documents Cited By:

**Clement (95)**

**Mt., Mk., Lk.**

**Romans**

**1 Co.**

**Eph.**

**1 Tim.**

**Titus**

**Heb.**

**James**

**1 Pt.**

**Ignatius (107)**

**Every book of**

**NT except**

**2 Th. and 2 Jn.**

**Polycarp (110)**

**Every book of**

**NT except**

**1 Th.**

**Titus**

**James**

**2 Pt.**

**2-3 Jn.**

**Jd.**

**Rv.**



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**IV. The LXX**

**V. How Accurate Is LXX Text?**

**VI. When Was LXX Translated?**



## **Some assert: there was no LXX before 3<sup>rd</sup> Century A.D.**

- **“LXX was hoax created by Alexandrian cult in 3<sup>rd</sup> Century AD to subvert belief in integrity of the Bible”**
- **These assertions oppose both ancient and modern facts; burden of proof rests on them**

# Dating the LXX: the evidence

## 1. Jewish writers

- ❑ Letter of Aristeas (between 150-100 BC)
- ❑ Ben-Sirach Prologue (Ecclesiasticus):  
about 185 BC by Jesus Ben Sirach;  
translated into Gk. about 132 BC

# Dating the LXX: the evidence

## 1. Jewish writers

- ❑ Letter of Aristeas (between 150-100 BC)
- ❑ Ben-Sirach Prologue (Ecclesiasticus)
- ❑ Philo of Alexandria (20 BC-AD 45)
- ❑ Josephus (AD 36-100)

# Dating the LXX: the evidence

## 1. Jewish writers

## 2. Apostolic writers

- From AD 95 to early decade in 2<sup>nd</sup> Century AD; many quotations, allusions, references to OT, all in Greek
- These quotations show close likeness to LXX known to us today

# Dating the LXX: the evidence

1. Jewish writers

2. Apostolic writers

- Clement of Rome: Letter to Corinth

- Chap.16 quotes Isa.53; very accurate



# Dating the LXX: the evidence

## 1. Jewish writers

## 2. Apostolic writers

- ❑ **Clement of Rome: Letter to Corinth**
- ❑ **Irenaeus (died AD 203): defends LXX translation of Is.7:14**
- ❑ **Clement of Alexandria (died 215): speaks of LXX as past fact**

# Dating the LXX: the evidence

**1. Jewish writers**


**2. Apostolic writers**

**3. Ancient versions**

- Jewish revisions of LXX: Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion**
- Old Latin: translation of LXX, Carthage, 2<sup>nd</sup> Century AD**

# Dating the LXX: the evidence

1. Jewish writers
2. Apostolic writers
3. Ancient versions
4. **Early manuscripts**
  - Ten papyri MSS dating from 2<sup>nd</sup> Cen. BC to early 1<sup>st</sup> Cen. AD



**“The translation of the Seventy dissenteth from the Original in many places, neither doth it come near it, for perspicuity, gravity, majesty; yet which of the Apostles did condemn it? Condemn it? Nay, they used it, (as it is apparent, and as Saint Jerome and most learned men do confess) which they would not have done, nor by their example of using it, so grace and commend it to the Church, if it had been unworthy of the appellation and name of the word of God”**

# LXX Conclusions

1. No evidence of 3<sup>rd</sup> Century AD origin
2. 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> Cen. disciples were overwhelmingly Greek-speakers; they needed gospel in their own language
3. There is no perfectly preserved Greek version
4. Christ & apostles quoted it as authoritative

## **Not to mention...ancient versions**

- **Latin** (used as early as c. AD 250)
- **Syriac** (Eastern Aramaic, Peshitta, Old Syriac)
- **Gothic** (first translation of Bible into language of Germanic family)
- **Many Old English** versions

