

2. The LXX was a Jewish work, and was at first held by the Jews in high esteem. According to the Letter of Aristeas, the translation of the Pentateuch was accorded official recognition by the Jewish Community in Alexandria, and Jewish writers such as Philo and Josephus used it preferably, if not exclusively. The LXX proved of supreme importance in the work of the preservation and expansion of Judaism. The Jews who, in the Dispersion, dwelt far from the land of their fathers, came to be less and less acquainted with Hebrew, yet the LXX caused them to remain continuously faithful to the Law and to the other Sacred Scriptures, while it also enabled those who were not Jews to study these writings.

The LXX, in addition, paved the way for later Christian missions. For in the first days of Christianity the Old Testament was the Holy Scripture κατ' ἐξοχήν for the Christians, just as it was for the Jews, and the Christian missionaries were able to discover a ready point of contact wherever there had already spread a knowledge of the Old Testament. Thus it came about that the earliest Christian communities were formed to a large extent from Jews of the Dispersion, while the LXX, being already everywhere wide-spread and well-known, was simply adopted by the Christians as the Church's Bible.

3. The Jews became alienated from the LXX a short time after its adoption by the Christian Church. The following circumstances appear especially to have contributed to this:

(a) 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 עַלְמָה Is. VII. 14. by παρθένος, which has been ever-recurring in all polemical writings against the Jews. The Christians justifiably maintained that this rendering originated from the old Jewish translators themselves, whereas the Jews with equal justification rejected it as being inaccurate. The points at issue were, however, in part, a mere matter of Christian additions, introduced into the LXX merely by the naïve lack of discrimination shown by the early Christians, as was, for instance, the case with regard to Ps. XCV. 10. (Ps. XCVI. 10. in Hebrew), in which ὁ κύριος ἐβασίλευσεν was supplemented by ἀπὸ