SOFTWARE & TECH

A New English Translation Of The Septuagint

PUBLISHED
November 25, 2026

REFERENCE
#1795584166425311

Introduction

For centuries, the Septuagint—the ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures—has stood as a cornerstone of biblical scholarship, liturgy, and religious identity. Yet for many English readers, accessing this foundational text has often meant relying on translations that are either outdated, overly technical, or difficult to read. The arrival of **A New English Translation Of The Septuagint** marks a significant milestone, offering fresh access to a work that shaped the religious world of early Judaism and Christianity. This article explores what this new translation offers, why it matters, and how it opens the door to deeper understanding of the Bible and its historical context.

Understanding the Septuagint: More Than a Translation

Before diving into the specifics of a new English rendering, it is essential to grasp what the Septuagint is and why it commands such attention. The Septuagint, often abbreviated as LXX, is a collection of Jewish scriptures translated from Hebrew and Aramaic into Greek, traditionally said to have been undertaken by seventy-two Jewish scholars in Alexandria, Egypt, around the third century BCE. The name derives from the Latin *septuaginta*, meaning "seventy."

This translation was not merely a linguistic exercise. It represented a cultural and theological bridge between the Hebrew-speaking world of ancient Israel and the Hellenistic world that dominated the Eastern Mediterranean. For Greek-speaking Jews who no longer understood Hebrew, the Septuagint became their Bible. Later, it became the version of the Old Testament most frequently quoted by the writers of the New Testament, and it remains the canonical Old Testament for many Eastern Orthodox churches.

The Septuagint includes books not found in the Hebrew Bible, such as the Maccabees, Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach, Tobit, and Judith, along with additions to Daniel and Esther. These texts, often called the deuterocanonical books or the Apocrypha, offer profound insights into Jewish thought and history during the intertestamental period. **A New English Translation Of The Septuagint** brings these important writings into clearer focus for contemporary readers.

Why a New Translation Was Needed

Limitations of Older English Versions

Existing English translations of the Septuagint, while valuable, have notable limitations. The classic translation by Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton, first published in 1844, remains widely used but is based on a text that predates modern critical editions. Brenton's language, while majestic, can feel archaic to today's readers, and

its reliance on a single manuscript tradition limits its accuracy.

The more recent *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*(NETS), published by Oxford University Press, represented a major step forward, but it intentionally mirrors the style of the New Revised Standard Version, which can sometimes obscure the distinct character of the Greek text. Additionally, NETS follows a formal equivalence approach that, while precise, can feel wooden in places.

Advances in Textual Scholarship

Over the past several decades, the field of Septuagint studies has undergone a renaissance. Critical editions such as the Göttingen Septuagint and the ongoing work of the Septuaginta-Unternehmen have established more reliable Greek texts than were available to earlier translators. **A New English Translation Of The Septuagint**draws on these advances, offering a rendering that reflects the best current understanding of the original Greek manuscripts.

Furthermore, scholars now recognize that the Septuagint is not merely a derivative work but a creative interpretation of its Hebrew source. A fresh translation allows modern readers to appreciate the theological and literary choices made by the ancient translators—choices that sometimes differ significantly from the Hebrew text that underlies most English Bibles today.

Key Features of the New Translation

Clarity and Readability

One of the most welcome aspects of **A New English Translation Of The Septuagint** is its commitment to readability. The translators have aimed for a natural, flowing English style that avoids both archaic language and excessively technical jargon. This makes the text accessible to a broad audience—from seasoned scholars to curious lay readers.

For example, passages that feel convoluted in older versions are rendered with greater coherence. Consider the poetic language of the Psalms or the narrative complexity of the books of Maccabees. The new translation captures the sense of the original without sacrificing clarity, allowing readers to engage with the meaning of the text more directly.

Faithful to the Greek, Aware of the Hebrew

The translation balances fidelity to the Greek text with awareness of the underlying Hebrew traditions. Where the Septuagint diverges from the Hebrew Bible—and there are many such places—the new translation notes this divergence, often in footnotes or brief introductions. This feature is invaluable for anyone interested in comparing the two textual traditions or understanding how early Jewish and Christian interpreters read their scriptures.

Comprehensive Scope

The new translation includes all the books of the Septuagint as recognized in major manuscript traditions, including the deuterocanonical books and additions to canonical books. This comprehensive scope means readers have access to the full range of texts that circulated in Greek-speaking Jewish and early Christian communities. Whether one is studying the history of the biblical canon, exploring the development of Jewish theology, or reading the Old Testament as the early Christians did, this translation provides a complete resource.

Scholarly Yet Approachable

While the translation is grounded in rigorous scholarship, it avoids overwhelming readers with critical apparatus. Footnotes and annotations are present but not intrusive, offering help with difficult passages, textual variants,

and significant interpretive issues. This balance makes the translation suitable for both academic study and personal reading.

How the New Translation Compares to Existing Versions

To appreciate the distinct contribution of **A New English Translation Of The Septuagint**, it helps to see how it compares with other major English versions.

Brenton's Translation (1844)

Brenton's version is a historical landmark, but its language is now more than 175 years old. The new translation updates vocabulary and syntax for modern readers while retaining the dignity appropriate to a sacred text. Moreover, Brenton based his work on the Codex Vaticanus as printed in the Sixtine Edition (1587), which predates modern textual criticism. The new translation uses the best available critical editions.

NETS (2007)

NETS was designed to serve as the Septuagint counterpart to the New Revised Standard Version. While this makes it useful for parallel reading with the NRSV, it also means that NETS sometimes adopts phrases that sound more like the NRSV than like the Greek Septuagint. The new translation aims to let the Greek text speak on its own terms, capturing its distinctive vocabulary, syntax, and theological emphases without forcing it into a predetermined English style.

Orthodox Study Bible (2008)

The Orthodox Study Bible uses a version of the Septuagint that is adapted for liturgical and devotional use within the Orthodox tradition. While valuable for its purpose, it is not intended as a critical translation for scholarly study. The new translation serves a wider audience, including those who want to study the Septuagint as a historical and textual witness.

Impact and Significance for Different Audiences

For Biblical Scholars

For scholars, **A New English Translation Of The Septuagint** provides a reliable and up-to-date reference that facilitates research in textual criticism, early Jewish exegesis, New Testament background, and the history of biblical interpretation. The translation's attention to textual variants and its clear indication of departures from the Hebrew tradition make it an essential tool for serious study.

For Students and Educators

Students of the Bible—whether in seminary, university, or personal study—will find this translation more approachable than older versions. Its readability lowers the barrier to engaging with the Septuagint directly, without requiring expertise in Greek. Educators can assign readings from the new translation with confidence that students will understand the text while still appreciating its ancient character.

For General Readers and the Faithful

Many Christians, especially those in Orthodox and Catholic traditions, encounter the Septuagint through liturgical readings and devotional study. A clear, accurate translation in contemporary English allows these readers to connect more deeply with the scriptures that shaped the worship and theology of the early church. Even readers in Protestant traditions, which typically rely on the Hebrew-based Old Testament, will gain new perspectives by exploring the Septuagint's version of familiar passages.

For Interfaith Dialogue

The Septuagint is a shared heritage of Judaism and Christianity. Jewish readers interested in the Hellenistic period or the history of biblical interpretation will find the new translation a valuable resource. The translation's

scholarly integrity and respectful treatment of the text make it suitable for interfaith study and dialogue.

Challenges and Considerations in Translating the Septuagint

Translating the Septuagint is not without its difficulties. The Greek of the Septuagint is not classical Greek but a distinctive dialect known as Hellenistic or Koine Greek, influenced by Hebrew idiom. Translators must decide how to handle passages where the Greek is awkward or ambiguous, often because it reflects a Hebrew construction unfamiliar to Greek speakers.

Another challenge is the existence of multiple manuscript traditions. The Septuagint has come down to us in several major codices—Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus—each with its own variants. A new translation must choose a base text and justify its choices, while also alerting readers to significant variants. **A New English Translation Of The Septuagint** faces these challenges head-on, offering transparent explanations of textual decisions without burdening the reader with unnecessary detail.

Moreover, the translator must resist the temptation to "correct" the Greek in light of the Hebrew. Part of the value of the Septuagint lies precisely in its differences from the Hebrew Bible. These differences reveal how ancient interpreters understood their scriptures and how the text evolved over time. A good translation respects the integrity of the Greek witness.

The Future of Septuagint Studies

The publication of **A New English Translation Of The Septuagint** is not the end of a journey but a new beginning. As more scholars and readers engage with the Septuagint, questions about its origins, its relation to the Hebrew Bible, and its role in early Judaism and Christianity will continue to generate fruitful research. The translation itself may be revised and refined as new manuscript discoveries emerge and as scholarship advances.

Digital tools are also transforming Septuagint studies. Online databases, interlinear texts, and searchable Greek-English editions make it easier than ever to compare the Septuagint with other ancient versions. The new translation, whether in print or digital format, will be part of this evolving ecosystem, helping to ensure that the Septuagint remains a living text rather than a museum piece.

Conclusion

A New English Translation Of The Septuagint is more than just a new version of an ancient book. It is an invitation to rediscover the scriptures as they were known by Jesus, the apostles, and the earliest Christian communities. It offers clarity without sacrificing depth, readability without compromising scholarship, and accessibility without losing the richness of the text. For anyone interested in the Bible, the history of Judaism and Christianity, or the art of translation itself, this new edition represents a valuable and welcome contribution. By opening up the Septuagint to a new generation of readers, it ensures that these ancient words will continue to speak with power and relevance in the modern world. Whether you are a scholar, a student, or a curious seeker, this translation invites you to explore a foundational text that has shaped the faith and thought of millions across the centuries.

Related Articles

- **Are James Blunt And Emily Blunt Related**
  URL: https://signage.openstack.org/are-james-blunt-and-emily-blunt-related.pdf
- **Was Remember Me Based On A True Story**
  URL: https://signage.openstack.org/was-remember-me-based-on-a-true-story.pdf
- **Ess Employee Self Service Costco**
  URL: https://signage.openstack.org/ess-employee-self-service-costco.pdf
- **The Case For Christianity By Cs Lewis**
  URL: https://signage.openstack.org/the-case-for-christianity-by-cs-lewis.pdf

TOPIC INDEX

#new • #english • #translation • #septuagint

DIGITAL EDITION

a-new-english-translation-of-the-septuagint

DIGITAL EDITION

a-new-english-translation-of-the-septuagint

DIGITAL EDITION

a-new-english-translation-of-the-septuagint

DIGITAL EDITION

a-new-english-translation-of-the-septuagint

DIGITAL EDITION

a-new-english-translation-of-the-septuagint