Heb. 1:6 & the LXX

By: Martin A. Shue

Hello El Borak,

Well, I had hoped to finish our current dicsussion before diving into the alleged quotes from the Septuagint (LXX). However, I see Steelmaker has no intentions of offering any support for his false claims against the AV. I am still waiting for this and the support for the verses I gave him. Thus far he has provided neither. Oh well, I suppose I shall carry on and just consider his words as more baesless accusations against God's words.

BTW, thanks for your post.

I am no moderator here but I do hope you will continue to post more. I would be happy to discuss Heb. 1:6 with you. I am curious though as to why you quoted 1:5-8 and only want to discuss 1:6. Some individuals try to make the case that all these quotes are from the LXX. It appears that you don't believe this because you only pointed out 1:6. Before we discuss this I have a quick thought/question. Don't you find it strange that Paul would quote the Hebrew text 4 times then suddenly jump to a Greek translation? Myself, I find this very odd. Especially, considering the fact that he is writing here to **Jewish people**. It is most commonly believed that the book of Hebrews was targeted at the Jews in Jerusalem. Again, this is especially noteworthy considering these Jews: 1) Never did acknowledge the Greek translation of the OT as authoritative but rather used the Hebrew text as their Scripture. 2) Carried on all their daily transactions in Hebrew (as the DSS prove). For these and other reasons it borders on the ludicrous to believe that Paul would seek to

persuade these Jews that Jesus was indeed the Christ by quoting from the LXX, a Greek translation that they did not recognize. [Just as an aside, for these very same reasons it is almost certain that the book of Hebrews was written in Hebrew and not Greek as some would have us believe.]

"Rejoice, ye heavens, with him, and let all the angels of God worship him; rejoice ye Gentiles, with his people, and let all the sons of God strengthen themselves in him; for he will avenge the blood of his sons, and he will render vengeance, and recompense justice to his enemies, and will reward them that hate him; and the Lord shall purge the land of his people."

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Again, your comments are rather interesting. As you may or may not know there is somewhat of a debate as to this very verse you quoted out of the LXX. I will try to be brief but it is hard to do considering the subject matter.

The LXX I use, which is Rahlf's edition and is 'the standard' LXX, reads,

ευφρανθητε ουρανοι αμα αυτω και προσκυνησατωσαν αυτω παντες υιοι θ εου ευφρανθητε εθνη μετα του λαου αυτου και ενισχυσατωσαν αυτω παντ ες αγγελοι θεου οτι το αιμα των υιων αυτου εκδικαται και εκδικησει και αν ταποδωσει δικην τοις εχθροις και τοις μισουσιν ανταποδωσει και εκκαθαρ ιει κυριος την γην του λαου αυτου

It is clear that this reads, "Rejoice ye heavens with him, and let all the sons of God worship him, rejoice ye Gentiles with his people, and let all the angels of God strengthen themselves in him..."

As you can readily see this is noticeably different than what you quoted ("...let all the angels of God worship him...let all the sons

of God strengthen themselves in him"). The reason for the difference, for those that may not know, is because the reading El Borak gave comes from Codex B (Brenton's edition). This is definitely an example of harmonizing by, the scribe of B. Apparently unable to find the cross-reference in Psalm 97:7 he simply harmonized the passage in Deut. with that of Hebrews. These types of instances further the belief that the LXX wasn't written until **after** the NT. [a topic for another discussion I am sure] Interestingly enough, Thomas Hewitt writes, "There is no Hebrew equivalent for 'Let all the angles of God worship him' in our existing text. It may be derived from Psalm xcvii. 7 'worship him, all ye gods' (Heb. elohim). The LXX has 'angels' instead of 'gods'. The quotation, however, is exactly found in Deuteronomy xxxii. 43 (LXX), **though this may be an addition by a later hand**." (*Tyndale NT Commentaries in Hebrews*, p. 55).

Hewitt is correct in his conclusion that the quote in Hebrews was taken, not from Deut. 32:43, but rather from Psalm 97:7. B.F. Westcott also testified to this fact in his commentary on Hebrews. He wrote, "3. It is yet more remarkable that, with two exceptions (2 Sam. Vii. 14; Is. Viii. 17 f.), all the primary passages which are quoted to illustrate the true nature of the Person and Work of Christ are taken from the Psalms." With this in mind we will briefly look at Psalm 97:7.

97:7 "worship him, all ye gods"

Heb. 1:6 "Και προσκυνησατθσαν αυτθ παντες αγγελοι Θεου.

The Hebrew word translated as 'gods' is *Elohim* which is also translated as 'angels'. One way to translate *Elohim* into English is to use the word 'gods'. One way to translate *Elohim* into Greek is to use the

word 'angelos'. This being the case, the Greek way of saying Psalm 97:7 would be, 'proskuneton auto pantes angeloi Theou'.

So, we see that Heb. 1:6 is not a quote from the Septuagint at all but a direct quote from the Hebrew reading of Psalm 97:7.

Thanks El Borak for the opportunity to discuss this verse. If there are further questions I will be glad to discuss them. If not, then maybe we can look at some of the other quotes Steelmaker made reference to.