

## A TEXTUAL COMPARISON OF HEBREWS 10:5b-7 AND LXX PSALM 39:7-9

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### **Abstract**

Many a theological statement has been deduced from alleged changes to the text of the Septuagint by the author of Hebrews. These deductions do not always keep in mind the different textual traditions of the Septuagint text. This article points out the relevance of determining the *Vorlage* of Hebrews before making such comparisons. This is done by using the quotation of LXX Ps 39:7-9 in Heb 10:5b-7 as an example. By means of textual criticism, the most probable *Vorlage* of LXX Ps 39:7-9 and the text of Heb 10:5b-7 is established. Thereafter, a comparison is made between these two texts. Differences between the texts are pointed out and shown to be intentional changes introduced by the author. In doing so, the theological meaning behind these changes is brought to the fore.

### **1. Introduction**

The NT book of Hebrews has been studied and commented upon numerous times. Its Christology is one of the high points of early Christian thought. Although not uncontested from the start, the book has gained repute in mainstream Christian theology and its views have made an indelible mark on Christian dogma. That this book has been subjected to countless numbers of studies in modern times is no surprise. For a wide variety of applications and many areas of study, it is necessary to inquire into the opinions held by the author of Hebrews. What were his<sup>1</sup> true thoughts? How did he theologize? How did he perceive the world around him and more importantly, how did he perceive Christ? These are important questions; questions deserving to be looked at from different angles. One of these angles would be to ask how the author understood the OT and how he used these texts in his own writings. It is at least clear that the author of Hebrews'

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<sup>1</sup> One can deduce from the prevalent patriarchal notions of the culture in which the text originated that the author of Hebrews was probably male.

formidable knowledge of the Scriptures was a key factor for the origin of his theology (Gheorghita 2003, 2).

It can be assumed that the author of Hebrews used the Septuagint when he deemed it necessary to refer to the Scriptures (Gheorghita 2003, 1-2). After all, the LXX was available in the language he was writing in. However, throughout Hebrews, some variant readings are to be found when the NT text is compared with editions of the LXX (Karrer 2006, 344). These variant readings have been a matter of dispute for some time (Thomas 1974, 507). Were these changes to the quotations from the LXX introduced by the author of Hebrews himself? If indeed so, it would have implications for the way in which the author understood the texts and it would also be significant for understanding his theology. Thus, it is imperative that the author of Hebrews' *Vorlage* be established. Only if certainty exists about both the text of the NT and the *Vorlage* of the author of Hebrews can such a comparison be made in a trustworthy manner. This is true of the book of Hebrews in general, but especially with respect to Heb 10:5b-7, where LXX Ps 39:7-9 is quoted. This article will take a closer look at these texts in order to show the importance of reconstructing the *Vorlage* of Hebrews<sup>2</sup>. At first glance, this text of Hebrews appears to have "some striking differences from the LXX" (Steyn 2001, 438). That there are textual problems can easily be seen in a comparison of critical editions of the text. The following table gives a comparison of the Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia, the LXX (Rahlfs) and the Nestle-Aland (27<sup>th</sup> edition) text of LXX Ps 39 (Ps 40 in the Masoretic Text). The underlined text indicates different readings in these three texts.

BHS (Ps 40:7-9)	LXX (Rahlfs) (Ps 39:7-9)	NA (Heb 10:5b-7)
זָבַח וּמִנְחָה לֹא־תִפְצֹתָ	θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας	θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας,
אֲזַנִּים כְּרִיתָ לִּי	ὥ <u>τία</u> δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι	<u>σῶμα</u> δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι·
עוֹלָה וְחֹטֵאָה לֹא שִׂאלְתָּ:	ὀλοκαύτω <u>μα</u> καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ ἤ <u>τησας</u>	ὀλοκαυτώ <u>ματα</u> καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ <u>εὐδόκησας</u> .
אִז אָמַרְתִּי הִנֵּה־בִּאֲתִי בְּמַגֵּלֶת סֵפֶר כְּתוּב עָלַי:	τότε εἶπον ἰδοὺ ἤκω ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ ἔμου	τότε εἶπον· ἰδου ἤκω, ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ ἔμου,
לְעִשׂוֹת־רְצוֹנְךָ	τοῦ ποιῆσαι τὸ θέλημά	τοῦ ποιῆσαι ὁ θεὸς τὸ

<sup>2</sup> At least to the extent that is possible according to the extant evidence.

BHS (Ps 40:7-9)	LXX (Rahlfs) (Ps 39:7-9)	NA (Heb 10:5b-7)
אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	σου ὁ θεός μου ἐβουλήθη	θέλημά σου.

Although this comparison serves as a good measure of the type of textual difficulties in these texts, it is not a thorough investigation of the way in which these texts differ from one another. For instance, a critical edition of the LXX is not necessarily the text used by the author of Hebrews, regardless of the better reading or tradition portrayed by it. It is necessary to first isolate differences between texts that are not due to the author's *Vorlage* (Ellingworth 1993, 500). This will be the first aim of this article, and will be done through an in-depth text critical study of LXX Ps 39:7-9. In order to make a comparison of this *Vorlage* with the text of Heb 10:5b-7, the NT text should also be established as firmly as this is possible. Since Heb 10:8-10 is a commentary on 10:5b-7, it should be examined as well. Once these texts are firmly established, Heb 10:5b-7 will be compared to the author of Hebrews' *Vorlage*. Differences in these texts will then be looked at in turn, and finally, the effect of all these changes will be considered together. Reference will be made to the context of Heb 10:5b-7 and especially the author's own exposition of the psalm quotation in Heb 10:8-10.

A text critical analysis of both the LXX and Hebrews will now be embarked upon.

## 2. Textual criticism of LXX Ps 39:7-9

### 2.1. Verse 7: σῶμα (Nearly all manuscripts) // ὥτια Ga La<sup>G</sup> // ὥτια 142 156 292<sup>mg</sup>

There has been much discussion of this specific text critical problem. This is remarkable, as the only external evidence pointing to ὥτια (and ὥτιά) against σῶμα is the Gallican Psalter and La<sup>G</sup>, together with the minuscules 142 and 156. In manuscript 292, ὥτιά has been placed as a remark in the margin. Even Jobes and Silva (2000, 195), though they choose to read ὥτια, have to admit that σῶμα "is the reading found in virtually the whole LXX tradition". This claim is also backed by Ahlborn (1966, 122), Braun (1984, 294) and Karrer (2006, 348). A choice for ὥτια as the most probable reading against σῶμα can certainly not be based on this very weak external evidence (Ahlborn 1966, 122; Johnson 1980, 62; Karrer 2006, 348).

How this variant came about is nigh impossible to explain, according to Fensham (1981, 92) and Kistemaker (1984, 275). Nevertheless, there are some interesting suggestions. At first glance, two basic hypotheses underlie these variants and the weak external attestation of ὠτία: either the text was translated with ὠτία and corruption set in at a very early stage, or σώμα was the original translation (Gheorghita 2003, 48; Jobes 1991, 388). A third *prima facie* possibility could be that the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the LXX text had a different word than אָזְנוֹתַי (“two ears”), which could be translated “body” (Jobes 1991, 389).

The most frequent explanation seems to be that σώμα originated through misreading (Ahlborn 1966, 122; Moyise 2001, 105). Such an explanation would involve dittography, as the Σ would need to be doubled (Karrer 2006, 348). Exponents of this explanation are of the opinion that a scribe read ΗΘΕΛΗΣΑΣΩΤΙΑ as ΗΘΕΛΗΣΑΣΣΩΜΑ (Ellingworth 1993, 500; Jobes & Silva 2000, 195-196; Johnson 1980, 62). Dittography of this kind is a quite common error; however, since the Σ needs to be doubled and there is such weak external evidence, this occurrence would be the least likely of the suggested reasons for the disagreement in the LXX and the Masoretic textual traditions.

A more probable suggestion would be that the translator(s) of the LXX made an interpretation of the Hebrew text (Lane 1991, 255). This would imply that the text was deliberately changed in order to preserve the meaning thereof. The expression as it stands in Hebrew might have been interpreted as too strange a concept (Karrer 2006, 348), or it might have meant something quite different in the Greek language. Another option is that the translator(s) of the LXX considered the Hebrew to be an example of *pars pro toto* or synecdoche, the use of a part to symbolize the whole (Ellingworth 1993, 500; Johnson 1980, 65; Lane 1991, 255; Laubach 1967, 197). (Karrer (2006, 348) chooses to call this metonymy, which in essence comes down to the same.) Even before Rahlfs’ Göttingen edition of the Psalms, Grosheide (1927, 274) took the difference as a case of *pars pro toto*. This would imply that the sense (at least for the translator(s) and the first readers) would remain the same<sup>3</sup>; an opinion which is held even today (Smith 1984, 122).

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<sup>3</sup> Kistemaker (1984, 275) discusses the problem of the meaning of MT Ps 40:7-9. He notes that, although references to Ex 21:6 and Deut 15:17 have been proposed, it is more likely that Is 50:5 sheds light on the subject. Is 50:5 in the New International Version reads: “The Sovereign LORD has opened my ears, and I have not been rebellious”, whereas Ex 21:6 and Deut 15:17 refer to the piercing of a slave’s ear. Kistemaker thus believes that the focus in MT

Considering that there are no extant witnesses to the Hebrew text that reads “body” in MT Ps 40:7, the option that a different textual tradition containing a variant which could be literally translated  $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$  is the least probable. In fact,  $\text{כָּרִיתָ}$  is wholly uncontested, there being no external evidence to back up such a claim (Johnson 1980, 62). Although this option can not be excluded completely, since there is no way to tell (Johnson 1980, 62-63), it should be regarded as weighing much less than the other options.

A fourth option would be that  $\acute{\omega}\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha$  was the original reading and that the author of Hebrews deliberately changed  $\acute{\omega}\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha$  to  $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$  to fit his theology. It could be argued that the text of Hebrews then in turn influenced the existing LXX texts reading  $\acute{\omega}\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha$  (Klijn 1975, 109). Such influence from the NT is definitely present in the LXX tradition, especially in the upper Egyptian tradition as identified by Rahlfs (*cf* Rahlfs 1931, 30-32). However, this is extremely unlikely, given the weak textual evidence for this particular reading in the LXX tradition<sup>4</sup> (Karrer 2006, 349), as was already proven with the first option. This suggestion is further complicated by the fact that Hebrews itself was not widespread (and neither was it uncontested) until the fourth century (Karrer 2006, 348-9). It would be impossible to explain away the fact that there is not even one branch of the LXX textual tradition that preserved this variant reading.

Thus, it is clear that  $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$  is the better attested reading. In a reconstruction of Hebrews’ *Vorlage* of the text of LXX Ps 39:7-9, this is the reading that should be adopted (Gheorghita 2003, 48; Johnson 1980, 62). There is good reason to believe that  $\acute{\omega}\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha$  never stood in the LXX text. The few late manuscripts that do read  $\acute{\omega}\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha$  have been influenced at this point by revisions of the LXX text by Aquila, Theodotion and the like (Gheorghita 2003, 48), who revised the text according to the Hebrew (Ellingworth 1993, 500). This is in accordance with the fact that  $\text{כָּרִיתָ}$  (“dug”) has been translated as  $\kappa\alpha\tau\eta\rho\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\omega$  (“prepared”) in the LXX. This reading is uncontested (Johnson 1980, 63) and it would be difficult to explain why  $\kappa\alpha\tau\eta\rho\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\omega$  is to be read with  $\acute{\omega}\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha$ . The extant evidence, therefore, points to an original  $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$  in the LXX text.

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Ps 40:7-9 is on *obedience*. Following this line, it would not be too difficult to show that “to prepare a body” in essence conveys the same meaning.

<sup>4</sup> For this reason, Karrer (2006, 349) suggests that the reading be corrected to  $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$  in the new Göttingen edition of the text.

2.2. Verse 7: ὄλοκαντώματα A L T Z Bo 55 1046 1219 2013 2040 Sa R La<sup>R</sup>  
La<sup>G</sup> Tht Sy // ὄλοκαύτωμα B S 1219 Ga

The external evidence for ὄλοκαντώματα and ὄλοκαύτωμα is difficult to weigh. Both these readings occur in reliable witnesses. Although at first glance it would appear that ὄλοκαντώματα has greater attestation, one has to note that the numerous witnesses in general form part of the same textual traditions as identified by Rahlfs. Ὀλοκαντώματα is found in the upper Egyptian tradition, as well as the Western textual tradition of the LXX. The singular is more prominent in the lower Egyptian tradition (Ahlborn 1966, 123). Also, there appears to be a link between ὄλοκαντώματα and ἠδύδοκῆσας (Ahlborn 1966, 124). These two variants are usually found in the same manuscripts. This clearly points to a textual tradition, rather than independent retroversions of the LXX according to the NT text. The large number of witnesses to either one of these two variants, therefore, attests to two separate traditions in the LXX text.

These variants must have originated at a fairly early stage of the LXX's textual tradition (Ahlborn 1966, 123). A possible explanation for these different readings would be assimilation to LXX Ps 50:18<sup>5</sup> (Ellingworth 1993, 500). This explanation is satisfactory. It would be much easier to explain a shift from the singular (ὄλοκαύτωμα) to the plural (ὄλοκαντώματα), given the similarity of the text to LXX Ps 50:18. As the external evidence shows, there is a greater possibility that the error in transmission arose in the LXX tradition itself than the possibility that the author of Hebrews himself assimilated this text to LXX Ps 50:18 (Braun 1984, 295).

It is therefore clear that there are two separate traditions of the LXX text. Even though the singular was the original reading, and the plural form developed only later, any one of these readings could have stood in Hebrews' *Vorlage*. However, since there is indeed proof that ὄλοκαντώματα was already in circulation, it is more likely that the author of Hebrews had the plural form at hand in his *Vorlage*.

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<sup>5</sup> LXX Ps 50:18 reads ὅτι εἰ ἠθέλησας θυσίαν ἔδωκα ἂν ὄλοκαντώματα οὐκ εὐδοκήσεις (“Because if You wanted sacrifice, I would have given [it], [but] You will not take pleasure in burnt offerings.”).

2.3. Verse 7: ἐζήτησας A L S T Z 55 1046 1219 2040 R Tht Sy (La<sup>R</sup> Aug) // ἤτησας B (La<sup>G</sup> Ga) // ηὐδόκησας 2013 Bo Sa // ἠθέλησας 55

Were the original reading of a text determined by sheer number of manuscripts, ἐζήτησας would be the favoured reading in this case without question. However, the situation calls for a closer assessment of the evidence at hand, since all four of these readings end on –ησας and, more to the point, all four of these readings would make sense should the internal evidence be weighed. At least three of these variants can be shown to mean more or less the same thing: “to seek” (ζητέω), “to ask” (αἰτέω) and “to desire” (θέλω). The remaining variant, εὐδοκέω, may mean “to delight in”, which is close enough to the other three to be placed in the same semantic field. All four of these readings make sense in the immediate context of LXX Ps 39:7. It is necessary to look at all four variants in turn to determine the most probable reading of Hebrews’ *Vorlage*.

The least likely of these readings would certainly be ἠθέλησας, as the external evidence weighs heavily against it. The only manuscript that has this reading is the tenth century manuscript 55 (*cf* Rahlfs 1979, 12). As Rahlfs (1979, 144) suggests, this reading can be easily explained. A scribe’s eye probably caught the last word of the first stichos of verse 7—ἠθέλησας. The word still makes complete sense in the context and it was overlooked in any proofreading that the manuscript might have undergone. It certainly is not the original reading nor was it present in the *Vorlage* of Hebrews.

The reading ηὐδόκησας is a bit more of an enigma. The external evidence weighs against it. However, there is a relation between ηὐδόκησας and the use of ὀλοκαντώματα (instead of the singular ὀλοκαύτωμα) as has been shown above. This may point to a complete textual tradition that began at a rather early stage. In fact, manuscripts that read ηὐδόκησας can be shown to be of the upper Egyptian textual tradition. Considered together with other changes to the text, however, this evidence is substantially weakened. Both MS 2013 and the Sahidic tradition can be shown to have been influenced by the NT<sup>6</sup>. This leaves the Bohairic tradition as the only witness, which is not of enough weight to convince one of such a reading.

This leaves two of the variant readings to account for. Ahlborn (1966, 124-125) is of the opinion that of these two, ἤτησας is the better reading. He takes ἐζήτησας as an error of transmission that originated when a scribe was distracted by the ἠθέλησας of the first stichos of verse 7.

<sup>6</sup> See below under the variants ὁ θεός, μου and ἐβουλήθην respectively.

Ahlborn further takes the fact that the reading in the Lucian Recension agrees with ἐζήτησας in accordance with his theory. The reason why this error in transmission was so widespread, according to Ahlborn, was that the error did not change the sense of the passage. However, the external evidence for ἤτησας is very weak. It is only Codex Vaticanus and two Latin manuscripts that contain this reading. Furthermore, since ἤτησας (*postulasti* in the two Latin MSS) agrees with the Masoretic text<sup>7</sup>, ἐζήτησας should certainly be taken as the *lectio difficilior*. The evidence provided by La<sup>G</sup> and the Gallican Psalter is further weakened by the fact that they seem to have been revised to correspond to the Masoretic text. Indeed, they are some of the only manuscripts that contain the erroneous reading ὡτία<sup>8</sup> in LXX Ps 39:7. Therefore, we can conclude that ἐζήτησας is the original reading, and that the variant reading ἤτησας was an attempt to bring the LXX tradition into line with the Hebrew text.

#### 2.4. Other textual problems in LXX Ps 39:7-9

In MS 2013, MS 55 and the Syriac transmission of the LXX text, the μου of LXX Ps 39:9 has been omitted. Since the external evidence is so weak at this point, it is likely that these three manuscripts were influenced by the NT separately, and hence the μου should be taken as original. There is not a single textual tradition wherein this variant occurs, even though MS 55 and the Syriac tradition can be shown to be related<sup>9</sup>.

It is noteworthy that the only witnesses to the transposition of ὁ θεός are also manuscript 2013 and the Syriac tradition. Taking these two variant readings together, it is quite clear that these changes to the text are the result of influence from the NT text. One can take μου as the original reading of the LXX text, and certainly the position of ὁ θεός as it stands in the majority of LXX texts is original.

The Latin transcription of R<sup>10</sup> reads *ethelesa* instead of ἐβουλήθεν. However, the external evidence is so overwhelming that the reading *ethelesa* in the Latin transcription of R can be explained as a scribal error. In the

<sup>7</sup> The MT reads עָזַחְתָּ.

<sup>8</sup> As has been shown above under the heading ὡτία / σῶμα.

<sup>9</sup> The Syriac can be categorized under the Lucian Recension, while manuscript 55 is related to, but not placed squarely within, the Lucian Recension. MS 2013 is reckoned under the upper Egyptian tradition (Rahlfs 1978, 21, 60, 70).

<sup>10</sup> R is a Greek MS with a Latin transcription as well as a Latin translation. The latter is designated La<sup>R</sup>. In this specific case, the word found in La<sup>R</sup> is a translation of ἐβουλήθεν.



Sahidic textual tradition, ἐβουλήθην is omitted. This is clearly due to influence from the NT text.

### 2.5. Reconstruction of Hebrews' Vorlage

The *Vorlage* of LXX Ps 39:7-9 can now be reconstructed. There should be a distinction between the better critical text of the LXX and the more probable *Vorlage* of the author of Hebrews, as “there is always the possibility that the reading in [Hebrews] will be different from a critical LXX text but faithful to his *Vorlage*” (Cadwallader 1992, 259). In this case, the reconstruction of Hebrews' *Vorlage* would differ only with regard to the variant reading *ὀλοκαύτωμα* / *ὀλοκαυτώματα*. It differs, however, in three instances with Rahlfs: *ὠτία* / *σῶμα*, *ὀλοκαύτωμα* / *ὀλοκαυτώματα* and *ἤτησας* / *ἐζήτησας*.

LXX (Rahlfs) (Ps 39:7-9)	Better reading of the LXX text (Ps 39:7-9)	Hebrews' Vorlage (Ps 39:7-9)
θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας	θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας	θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας
<u>ὠτία</u> δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι	<u>σῶμα</u> δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι	<u>σῶμα</u> δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι
<u>ὀλοκαύτωμα</u> καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ ἤτησας	<u>ὀλοκαύτωμα</u> καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ ἐζήτησας	<u>ὀλοκαυτώματα</u> καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ ἐζήτησας
τότε εἶπον ἰδοὺ ἤκω ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ ἐμοῦ τοῦ ποιῆσαι τὸ θέλημά σου ὁ θεός μου ἐβουλήθην	τότε εἶπον ἰδοὺ ἤκω ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ ἐμοῦ τοῦ ποιῆσαι τὸ θέλημά σου ὁ θεός μου ἐβουλήθην	τότε εἶπον ἰδοὺ ἤκω ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ ἐμοῦ τοῦ ποιῆσαι τὸ θέλημά σου ὁ θεός μου ἐβουλήθην

### 3. Textual criticism of Hebrews

#### 3.1. Verse 5: *σῶμα* (Nearly all manuscripts) // *ὠτία* *Syr<sup>p mg</sup>*

Nearly all the MSS available read *σῶμα* at this point. There is only one witness to *ὠτία*, namely the Peshitta text. However, this evidence is further weakened by the fact that the reading occurs in the margin. This marginal note is clearly on account of assimilation to the MT (Ellingworth

1993, 500). There can be no doubt that the original reading of Heb 10:5 is σῶμα, whether this was the reading in Hebrews' *Vorlage* or not.

3.2. Verse 6: ὀλοκαύτωμα P46 D<sup>p</sup> 1881 vg<sup>ms</sup> sa<sup>mss</sup> E<sup>p</sup> Eth // ὀλοκαυτώματα **✠**  
A C Ψ Majority r vg<sup>cl</sup> sy sa<sup>mss</sup> bo

To tackle the question whether ὀλοκαύτωμα or ὀλοκαυτώματα stood in the autograph of Hebrews is definitely a difficult exercise. A preliminary look at the manuscript evidence makes this clear, as there are valuable textual witnesses to both sides of the argument. This necessitates that the external evidence should be discussed in some detail.

MSS reading ὀλοκαύτωμα have a smaller count than those reading ὀλοκαυτώματα. However, P46 and D<sup>p</sup> should be counted amongst these witnesses, demanding at least a second glance. The greater part of the MSS is in favour of ὀλοκαυτώματα. This reading is found in a, one of the most important manuscripts for NT textual criticism. The text type of this MS is decidedly Alexandrian (Metzger 1968, 46). An interesting occurrence in this MS is that it reads ὀλοκαύτωμα in the OT, while reading ὀλοκαυτώματα in the NT. Another important witness reading ὀλοκαυτώματα is the fifth century Codex Alexandrinus. This manuscript is also of the Alexandrian text type, at least in the Pauline corpus<sup>11</sup> (Metzger 1968, 47). The singular, ὀλοκαύτωμα, has support from both the Alexandrian tradition and the Western tradition. It also has some independent manuscripts in its favour. However, the greater bulk of the Alexandrian MSS agree with the plural form, ὀλοκαυτώματα. This reading also has the support of the Byzantine tradition, the Syriac tradition and there is considerable support from the Latin traditions. When one tallies the votes, ὀλοκαυτώματα wins, although with some reservations. Nevertheless, the extant external evidence points to an original ὀλοκαυτώματα in the text of Hebrews.

There were two traditions in the LXX concerning these variant readings. It is conceivable that a scribe could have changed an original ὀλοκαύτωμα to ὀλοκαυτώματα in order to agree with the reading of his LXX text, or *vice versa*. However, to some degree, ὀλοκαυτώματα is the *lectio difficilior*. The Masoretic text reads the singular, and it is more probable that a difficult reading could have been changed in order to agree with the Masoretic text than that a reading already agreeing with the Hebrew could have been

<sup>11</sup> In the MS tradition, Hebrews is counted among the *corpus Paulini* (Aland *et al* 1992, 13\*).

changed to disagree with it (Ellingworth 1993, 500). When all the evidence is taken together, it seems most probable that ὀλοκαυτώματα, rather than the singular, belongs to the original text of Hebrews (Ahlborn 1966, 123).

3.3. Verse 6: ἐζήτησας 623\* 1836 // ἐκζητήσεις Ψ pc // ἠὺδόκησας A C D<sup>p\*</sup>  
*P<sup>ap</sup> 38 69 81 104 181 218 241 255 256 263 326 440 442 547 623 1611*  
*1827 1834 2005 // εὐδόκησας P46 ⋈ D<sup>p2</sup> K<sup>ap</sup> L<sup>ap</sup> Chr Thret Majority*

The correct reading amongst these variants, like ὀλοκαυτώματα and ὀλοκαύτωμα, is not that easily decided upon. Both the external and the internal evidence should be weighed in detail in order to determine the most likely reading.

The least probable reading in this case would certainly be ἐκζητήσεις. This reading is only attested in Ψ, a ninth century uncial manuscript and a few other MSS. Generally, the readings in Ψ should be noted; however, since it is almost the only witness to this variant reading, this evidence can be discarded on the grounds of the weak external attestation. Read internally, ἐκζητήσεις is also the weakest of the available options. Braun (1984, 295) points to the similarity with LXX Ps 50:18b, and regards this reading as derived from this text. This view has merit, since ὀλοκαυτώματα is also found in Ψ. LXX Ps 50:18b has ὀλοκαυτώματα with a future tense εὐδοκήσεις. It is possible that a scribe introduced ἐκζητήσεις as a conflation between εὐδοκήσεις and ἐζήτησας. Nevertheless, the weak evidence, both internal and external, makes this reading the least likely to be the original reading of Hebrews.

Ἐζήτησας also has rather weak attestation. There are only two minuscules that bear witness to this variant; of the two at least one—MS 1836—is in the Western tradition (Greenlee 1964, 118). Furthermore, it is only the corrector of MS 623 that agrees with the reading. The variant agrees with one of the main LXX traditions, and it could be that a scribe, knowing the LXX text, corrected the reading to fit the reading found in the LXX (Braun 1984, 295). In any case, the external evidence is so weak that it can hardly be considered original.

The real problem arises with the readings ἠὺδόκησας and εὐδόκησας. All the weighty witnesses gather round these two readings. Good evidence for both sides can be pointed out, but the reading εὐδόκησας is slightly better attested. P46 in agreement with a should weigh more than A. Most minuscules are of a far lesser importance, although the greater number of minuscules do attest to a widespread reading of εὐδόκησας, and this should

surely be noted. Nevertheless, in this case, the external evidence is not completely persuasive.

Both εὐδόκησας and ἠϋδόκησας make sense in this context. In fact, there is no difference between these two readings at all, save for the difference in spelling. Ηϋδόκησας, with the diphthong augmented, is simply the Attic form of εὐδόκησας (Braun 1984, 295; cf Blass, Debrunner & Rehkopf 1984, 53). It is not likely that ἠϋδόκησας was changed to εὐδόκησας. Rather, it is more probable that εὐδόκησας was changed in a revision of the text to ἠϋδόκησας to be in accordance with the Attic Greek usage. If taken together with the slight preference for εὐδόκησας with regard to the external evidence, it is plain that εὐδόκησας is the better reading between the variants ἐζήτησας, ἐκζητήσει, ἠϋδόκησας and εὐδόκησας.

### 3.4. Verse 7: ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ D<sup>p\*</sup> sy<sup>p</sup> (d e)

In D<sup>p</sup> and the Peshitta, a clear case of homophony occurs. The variant reading ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ can only be explained as a scribe taking ἰδοὺ ἦκω as ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ. This is quite possible, since “[a]t a very early date various Greek vowels and diphthongs had come to be pronounced alike...and the rough breathing was not distinguished in pronunciation” (Greenlee 1964, 64). The Latin manuscripts d and e, reading *ecce ego*, is obviously a translation of the erroneous Greek.

### 3.5. Verse 7: γαρ P46 D<sup>p\*</sup>.<sup>2</sup>

A γαρ has been inserted between γέγραπται and περὶ ἑμοῦ in at least two manuscripts. P46, of the Alexandrian text type (Metzger 1968, 252), and two correctors of Codex Claromontanus<sup>12</sup> have this variant reading (Metzger 1968, 51). This external evidence is far from convincing. Probably, the γαρ has been inserted to aid the flow of the argument. It is unlikely that this was a revision of the text to conform to the OT, as this reading has no counterpart in the LXX tradition, nor in the MT.

### 3.6. Verse 7: ἦκω N<sup>\*</sup>

A corrector of Codex Sinaiticus has left out ἦκω. This is almost certainly erroneous, as it makes the sentence quite unreadable.

<sup>12</sup> At least nine correctors have gone over Codex Claromontanus (Metzger 1968, 51)!

3.7. Verse 8: *θυσίας καὶ προσφορὰς* **ⲛ\*** A C D<sup>p\*</sup> P<sup>apr</sup> 33 1175 pc latt sy<sup>p</sup> sa<sup>mss</sup>  
*bo* // *θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν* **ⲛ<sup>2</sup>** D<sup>p2</sup> I Ψ Majority sy<sup>h</sup> sa<sup>mss</sup>

As is the case with *ὀλοκαύτωμα* and *ὀλοκαυτώματα*, both the plural and the singular forms of *θυσία* and *προσφορά* are attested by weighty witnesses. However, the external evidence is in favour of the plural, even though the majority text reads *θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν*. It is clear that *θυσίας καὶ προσφορὰς* has better attestation, since the best MSS, especially those designated by Aland and Aland as Category I and II, read the plural.

The internal evidence also points to *θυσίας καὶ προσφορὰς* as the preferred reading. The reading in verse 5 is without doubt the singular form, as is the LXX reading in Ps 39:7-9. There is no reason why any scribe would change *θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν* to *θυσίας καὶ προσφορὰς*. There is also no explanation for an unintentional change, such as errors of sight. The only plausible explanation would be that a scribe changed the plural form back to the singular in order to make it agree with the quotation of the LXX, or more likely, with the reading found in verse 5. *Θυσίας καὶ προσφορὰς* is definitely the more difficult reading, and as such, can be taken as the original reading of Heb 10:8.

3.8. Verse 8: *τον* D<sup>p</sup> Majority // *τον* omitted in P46 **ⲛ** A C P<sup>apr</sup> Ψ 33 81 104  
 326 1175 1739 1881 2464 2495 pc

Before *νόμον* in Heb 10:8, there occurs in the majority text and D<sup>p</sup> an insertion of *τον*. The witnesses that do omit *τον* in this instance, however, are some of the best manuscripts for establishing the original text. Without question, the external evidence points to the fact that *τον* is a later addition to the text.

Internally, the question is more difficult to assess. The addition of *τον* to the text does not change the interpretation to a significant degree. Whatever the construction, the point still hits home: sacrifices in the old covenant were brought according to (the) law. It is difficult to decide whether a definite article before *νόμος* is in agreement with the author of Hebrews' style. The phrase *κατὰ (τον) νόμον* occurs a further 5 times in Hebrews: in 7:5, 7:16, 8:4, 9:19 and 9:22. Of these, two have further text critical difficulties, namely 8:4 and 9:19. Both *κατὰ τον νόμον* and *κατὰ νόμον* are attested, however, without any great text critical problems by the other three occurrences. Furthermore, in 8:4 and 9:19, weighty manuscripts attest first to the one

reading and then to the next: *e.g.*, in 8:4, P46, A and the important miniscule 33 read *κατὰ νόμον*, while the same manuscripts read *κατὰ τον νόμον* in 9:19. These manuscripts are least likely to contain a text type which have been exposed to a revision which inserted or removed definite articles in Hebrews with reference to the preposition *κατά*. As these are mostly the same manuscripts which attest to *τον* being omitted in Heb 10:8, this can be taken as the original reading.

3.9. Verse 9: *ὁ θεός* **N**<sup>2</sup> Majority lat sy<sup>p,h</sup> bo<sup>ms</sup> // *ὁ θεός* omitted in P46 **N**<sup>\*</sup> A C D<sup>p</sup> K<sup>ap</sup> P<sup>apr</sup> Ψ 33 326 1175 1881 2464 2495 al r

The variant reading *ὁ θεός* is found inserted between *ποιῆσαι* and *τὸ θέλημα* in the majority of manuscripts. The reading is not found, however, in the more weighty manuscripts. The external evidence thus weighs heavily to the side of *ὁ θεός* being omitted.

According to Metzger (1975, 669), *ὁ θεός* is an assimilation to LXX Ps 39:9 or Heb 10:7. It is easier to explain how a scribe, noticing that *ὁ θεός* has been omitted, decided to amend the problem by adding it to the second quotation as well. It is more probable that this reading is an assimilation to Heb 10:7 itself, as this is closer and would be recalled easily, rather than to a LXX tradition that is not at all well attested.

3.10. Verse 10: *οἱ* D<sup>p1</sup> Majority // *ἡμεῖς* 323 pc // *οἱ* and/or *ἡμεῖς* omitted in P46 P79<sup>vid</sup> **N** A C D<sup>p\*</sup> P<sup>apr</sup> Ψ 33 81 104 365 629 630 1739 1881 2464 2495 al latt co

Before the clause starting with *διὰ* in Heb 10:10, some manuscripts add *οἱ*, while others insert *ἡμεῖς*. The latter is very improbable, as there are very few witnesses to this reading. The addition of this personal pronoun do not hinder the text; nevertheless, it is redundant. To say the least, when *οἱ* is inserted, “the phrasing is extremely awkward” (Attridge 1989, 268), making this the *lectio difficilior*. However, the omission is found in a whole array of good MSS. The external evidence leaves no doubt that the reading was not found in the original reading of Hebrews.

3.11. Verse 10: αἵματος D<sup>p</sup>\* // σώματος (Nearly all manuscripts)

In Codex Claromontanus, a corrector has changed the σώματος found in nearly all the manuscripts to αἵματος. As Attridge (1989, 268) notes, this is probably on account of the occurrence of αἷμα in verse 4 and the special importance given to blood in chapter 9. At any rate, the external evidence is so overwhelming that this reading can hardly be correct.

## 4. A comparison of Heb 10:5b-7 with LXX Ps 39:7-9

After the above study of the text critical problems in Heb 10:5b-10, it is clear that the text of Heb 10:5b-10 can be taken as it stands in the 27<sup>th</sup> edition of NA. A comparison of Heb 10:5b-7 with LXX Ps 39:7-9 yields the following differences<sup>13</sup>:

LXX Ps 39:7-9 in Hebrews' Vorlage	The text of Heb 10:5b-7
θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας σῶμα δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι	θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας, σῶμα δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι
ὀλοκαντώματα καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ <u>ἐζήτησας</u> .	ὀλοκαντώματα καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ <u>εὐδόκησας</u> .
τότε εἶπον ἰδοὺ ἦκω ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ ἐμοῦ	τότε εἶπον ἰδοὺ ἦκω, ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ ἐμοῦ,
τοῦ ποιῆσαι <u>τὸ θέλημά σου ὁ θεός μου</u> <u>ἐβουλήθη</u>	τοῦ ποιῆσαι <u>ὁ θεὸς τὸ θέλημά σου</u> .

1. εὐδόκησας has been inserted in the place of ἐζήτησας<sup>14</sup>.
2. μου has been omitted from the last line of the quotation.
3. ὁ θεός has been transposed to stand before τὸ θέλημά in the Hebrew text.

<sup>13</sup> It would be best to treat the differences in the last line of the quotation in Hebrews as three separate changes to the text.

<sup>14</sup> As has been shown *supra* under the LXX text critical study, ἐζήτησας is to be preferred to ἦτησας. At any rate, chances are better that the author of Hebrews had a text reading ἐζήτησας as his *Vorlage*.

4. The author of Hebrews has ended the quotation just before ἐβουλήθεν. Therefore, ἐβουλήθεν can be seen as omitted from the text of Hebrews.

#### 4.1. The differences: Intentional or not?

Differences between the LXX and Hebrews can be explained in quite a number of ways. Thomas (1974, 314) notes the following explanations<sup>15</sup> for different readings in the LXX and Hebrews:

- Errors in the transcription of his manuscript.
- A lost version of the Greek OT.
- Citation from memory.
- Liturgical sources.
- Intentional adaptations by the author.

Not all of these suggestions carry the same weight. The following remarks need to be made:

- Although errors in the transcription of the author's *Vorlage* are possible, it is unlikely to be the cause of changes as shown above under the comparison of Heb 10:5b-7 with LXX Ps 39:7-9. In any case, there is no textual evidence to back up such a claim.
- To propose a lost version of the Greek OT remains a conjecture—there are no sources pointing to the existence of such a document. At any rate, the text of Hebrews generally holds too close to the extant Greek manuscripts that such a lost version could have been very different to the LXX texts known to us. In fact, as Karrer (2006, 342) points out, “[t]here is good evidence that our author appreciates written *Vorlagen* where he has them”,<sup>16</sup> indicating the close resemblance of the LXX text to the text of Hebrews.

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<sup>15</sup> Thomas himself (1974, 320) adds two more possible reasons for changes in Hebrews, but refutes them just as quickly. The first is that changes could have been made to the text in order to bring it into line with the readings in the MT. This is, however, unlikely, as most changes do exactly the opposite. Thomas also notes that some changes could be due to stylistic changes that occurred in the transmission of the LXX. According to Thomas, this is also unlikely, as these changes seldom fit into the context of the LXX.

<sup>16</sup> This is especially true of the Psalms (Karrer 2006, 342).



- The same goes, obviously, for citation from memory. It is highly unlikely that such a close relationship to the text of the LXX could have been established if the quotations were made by way of memory. In general, the text of Hebrews resembles the text of the LXX in detail.
- The use of liturgical sources is not in itself a bad suggestion; however, there is no reason to propose that these liturgical sources would differ from the LXX text. At least no such sources indicating these precise changes are extant.
- It would be safe to say that the author of Hebrews was acquainted with some form of the LXX text (Laub 1988, 131; cf Kistemaker 1984, 275). Kistemaker (1984, 275) and Karrer (2006, 339) is of the opinion that the author of Hebrews *only* used the LXX text. Although not entirely following the traditions of MSS such as Sinaiticus, Vaticanus and Alexandrinus, there is little doubt that the text follows the LXX closely (Lane 1991, 262). More to the point, as Ahlborn (1966, 123-124) and McCullough (1980, 367) note, Hebrews' *Vorlage* is akin to both of Rahlfs' Egyptian texts—especially where the Psalms are concerned. This relation to the Egyptian tradition is also confirmed by the textual evidence bearing witness to LXX Ps 39:7-9. Thomas (1974, 325) even concludes that Hebrews' *Vorlage* can be shown to go back to a single MS (which is, of course, not extant). Although Thomas' opinion is a little bit optimistic, it is quite clear that the author of Hebrews made use of a written *Vorlage*. Changes to the text can, therefore, indeed point to *intentional* changes to the wording of the *Vorlage* used by the author of Hebrews.

Although any of the options listed by Thomas might be possible—one simply cannot tell—the extant evidence points to the proposal of intentional changes in the quotation of LXX Ps 39:7-9 in Heb 10:5b-7. Thomas (1974, 320) notes:

Our research yields a pattern of significant changes which must be more than accidental. That interpretational significance was found for every variation...except two...indicates that they were intentionally chosen by the author. It is difficult to imagine that he could have found different [OT] texts with appropriate variations in every instance or that he would have had a single LXX text with all these readings differing from [the LXX] to which he would attach interpretational significance in every instance. Since the variations were so appropriately used by the author, it is logical to conclude that they were originated by him.

While these changes may not be to the full extent that Ellingworth (1993, 500) believes, it can be said that the author of Hebrews “skilfully adjusts his LXX text to support” his own understanding. It now remains to enquire about the purpose of the author of Hebrews’ change to the text. This purpose might be gleaned from the understanding which the author of Hebrews subsequently sets out himself in Heb 10:8-10<sup>17</sup>.

#### 4.2. *The context of Heb 10:5b-7*

The context in which Heb 10:5b-7 is quoted is a depiction by the author of a contrast between the old covenant and the new covenant. In this specific pericope, which can be taken as Heb 10:5-10 (Ellingworth 1993, 488; Lane 1991, 262), the emphasis is on sacrifice in the new covenant. The verses preceding the quotation, including the end of ch. 9, concerns the inefficacy of earthly (i.e. old covenantal) sacrifices (Attridge 1989, 273), which have to be made repeatedly. At this stage, the author introduces the incarnation of Christ. Εἰσερχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον (“coming into the world”) is merely a Semitic way of saying that one is born (Braun 1984, 293; Kistemaker 1984; Steyn 2001, 437). It is this person, the one coming into the world, on whose lips the quotation is placed by the author of Hebrews. Commentators<sup>18</sup> are in agreement that it is Christ who utters the quotation in the context of Hebrews, even though He is not explicitly named as the one speaking. This is probably done for emphasis, as the naming of Christ occurs only later, in verse 10 (Ellingworth 1993, 499). This fact is further strengthened by the ἰδοὺ ἤκω (“see, I have come”) which is brought into relation with the birth of Christ (Lane 1991, 262). That it is Christ speaking is of importance, since in the whole of Hebrews, “even words that were not originally words of God in the Scripture are regarded as coming from God and the Spirit” (Karrer 2006, 341). It is also necessary to take a close look at the verses following the quotation, as this is a commentary on the quotation by the author himself.

<sup>17</sup> As Schunack (2002, 138) and Weiss (1991, 506) note, Heb 10:8-10 is a *peshet*-like Midrash on LXX Ps 39:7-9.

<sup>18</sup> To name but a few of those who state this unequivocally: Attridge (1989, 273), Braun (1984, 293), deSilva (2000, 321), Ellingworth (1993, 498), Grosheide (1927, 273), Hume (1997, 85), Karrer (2006, 341), Kistemaker (1984, 274), Lane (1991, 263), Laub (1988, 131), Moyise (2001, 104), Ruager (1987, 179), Smith (1984, 122), Stedman (1991, 104), Steyn (2001, 437), Strobel (1991, 120) and Thomas (1974, 314).

The author of Hebrews systematically works through his argument. Using step by step logic, he first quotes the psalm that goes against the grain of the Pentateuch (stating that it is not sacrifices that God requires), and then draws attention to this fact (Buchanan 1983, 165). In vv. 8 and 9, two points are meticulously explicated. This is made clear by *ἀνώτερον λέγων... τότε εἶρηκεν* (“first saying... then He said”). Scholars are somewhat divided on the first point, but agree that the second concerns doing God’s will (Attridge 1989, 275; Barnes 1949, 228; Buchanan 1983, 165; Ruager 1987, 182; Smith 1984, 123). The first is seen as either the Torah (Attridge 1989, 275; Buchanan 1983, 165) and the “whole system of ritual and sacrifice” (Smith 1984, 123) or merely sacrifices as such (Barnes 1949, 228; Ruager 1987, 182; Weiss 1991, 507). These opinions do not vary that much, and both deserve some merit. The greater context concerns the old covenant, and read in this light, the *ἀνώτερον* may refer to the law. This is strengthened by the fact that *νόμος* (“law”) is referred to in Heb 10:1. Taken in this sense, *ἀνώτερον* refers to “that which come before the quotation”. In the more immediate context, however, *ἀνώτερον* concerns the quotation itself. This is more probable, as it fits the author’s systematic expounding of the quotation. In this case, *ἀνώτερον* refers principally to the sacrifices. The immediate context is not at odds with the greater context - the sacrifices, whether it is referred to as a system or simply sacrifices as such, are brought *κατὰ νόμον προσφέρονται* (“according to law”).

The author conflates vv. 5 and 6, grouping all the references to sacrifices together on the one hand, and the two verbs on the other. Instead of *θυσίαν... προσφορὰν... οὐκ ἠθέλησας... ὀλοκαυτώματα... περὶ ἁμαρτίας... οὐκ εὐδόκησας*, the order is now *θυσίας... προσφορὰς... ὀλοκαυτώματα... περὶ ἁμαρτίας... οὐκ ἠθέλησας... εὐδόκησας*. The two types of sacrifices portrayed in the singular in the quotation (*θυσίαν* and *προσφορὰν*) are also changed to the plural (*θυσίας* and *προσφορὰς*). This results in an even more emphatic statement than the quotation itself: any kind of offering, no matter how many or of what type, are incapable of doing what God wants to be done (Barnes 1949, 228; Lane 1991, 264). Thus, it is already clear in v. 8 that there are two concepts that are important to the author: the inefficacy of sacrifices and the doing of God’s will. This dilemma leads directly to verse 9, where Christ is portrayed as stepping forward to do exactly that. This sentence can only be read as such if the *ἐβουλήθεν* of LXX Ps 39:9 is omitted, as the author of Hebrews has done. Christ takes away (*ἀναιρεῖ*) the sacrifices, in order that the will of God be done.

V. 10 forms the climax to the author’s comment on the quotation of LXX Ps 39:7-9 (Attridge 1989, 276). In this verse, the final application of

the quotation is issued (Strobel 1991, 121). God's will is revealed to be the sanctification of believers through the death of Christ (Ruager 1987, 182). His body<sup>19</sup> (σῶμα) becomes the instrument with which the will of God is executed (Schunack 2002, 139). The point remains, however, that this is done in obedience to the will of God (Barnes 1949, 228; Strobel 1991, 122) and that the body becomes a secondary image with regard to God's will. The author has masterfully woven together the two points (Weiss 1991, 507) that he himself has deduced from the quotation. The initial contrast, which the author of Hebrews pointed out, is now fused together, as Christ's body as obedient sacrifice is shown to be equal to the will of God (Attridge 1989, 274). This can also be seen therein that Christ's name is given as Jesus Christ. "Jesus" generally refers to the humanity of Christ, while the title "Christ" is generally reserved by the author of Hebrews with reference to his heavenly status (Attridge 1989, 276). The citation of both titles together, which occurs here for the first time<sup>20</sup> in Hebrews, is therefore a reference to both these aspects taken together. Christ's function as heavenly High Priest is taken in conjunction with the sacrifice of his earthly body.

In the greater context of Hebrews, the author uses this quotation and its commentary to once again mark the difference between the old covenant and the new covenant. In the old covenant, sacrifices were made since they were seen as commanded by God, while the new covenant is grounded upon the once-off sacrifice as a "result of a desire to do God's will" (Thomas 1974, 314-315). Specifically, therefore, the goal of Heb 10:1-18 is to highlight the sacrifice of Jesus' body, as an exponent of the new covenant, against the repeated offerings of animals as exponents of the old covenant (Jobes & Silva 2000, 197-198).

### **5. Reasons for intentional changes to the text**

Since it can be shown that there are intentional changes to the text, there should be enquired as to the motive of these changes. The change of ἐζήτησας to εὐδόκησας, the omission of μου, the transposition of ὁ θεός and the omission of ἐβουλήθη will now be looked at in turn.

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<sup>19</sup> The text critical variant σῶμα, therefore, plays an important role in the interpretation of this passage.

<sup>20</sup> This occurs only once more in Hebrews, namely in Heb 13:8.

## 5.1. εὐδόκησας

That there has been a change in the quotation at this point is not to be doubted. However, the question remains as to whether this change affected the meaning of the quotation. Commentators (perhaps seeking to defend the author of Hebrews' honourable intentions) like Barnes (1949, 226) believe that this change does not alter the intention of the psalm. Others, like Hume (1997, 85), take this change as a sure proof that the author quoted from memory. This would imply that, for the author, ἐζήτησας and εὐδόκησας would denote exactly the same meaning. This is not the case. As shown above, the author intentionally changed ἐζήτησας to εὐδόκησας in his writing. As Thomas (1974, 314) notes, the author could hardly say that God does not ask sacrifices. In fact, that God would want a sacrifice is a very relevant presupposition for the argument of the author in Heb 10:8-10. God wants obedience; it is true that it is more important than sacrifice *per se*, but the obedient *sacrifice* of Christ's body is God's will. To state that God does not *demand* (ζητέω) sacrifice would simply be a bit too blunt (Ellingworth 1993, 501). The use of εὐδοκεῖν provides a good replacement. It still forms a parallel to ἠθέλησας, but does not contradict the author's argument (Thomas 1974, 314). Furthermore, εὐδοκεῖν might already have been in the author's mind as it occurs in a quotation of Hab 2:4 in Heb 10:38. It might also be possible that the author was influenced (knowingly or not) by LXX Ps 50:18<sup>21</sup>. Johnson (1980, 61), however, might only be correct up to a point when he takes the change as "an interpretation of the meaning of the Hebrew and the LXX". There is no conclusive evidence of any influence or knowledge of the Hebrew text in this change at all.

Jobs and Silva (2000, 197) have suggested that the use of εὐδοκεῖν might possibly recall the events surrounding the baptism of Christ as well as the transfiguration<sup>22</sup>. The author could certainly have known the tradition. Even if a written Gospel was not known to him, it would not be too absurd a suggestion that he knew the tradition orally. Nevertheless, there is no proof for such a suggestion and it remains speculative. There is no direct link in

<sup>21</sup> LXX Ps 50:18 reads: ὅτι εἰ ἠθέλησας θυσίαν ἔδωκα ἂν ὀλοκαυτώματα οὐκ εὐδοκήσεις.

<sup>22</sup> In Matt 3:17, God says: οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα ("This is my beloved Son, in Who I am pleased"). The whole phrase is repeated in Matt 17:5. In Luke 3:22 the phrase, spoken at the baptism, is rendered as σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν σοὶ εὐδόκησα ("You are my beloved Son, in You I am pleased").

the text with the baptism or transfiguration of Christ that would make such a suggestion credible.

### 5.2. μου

The μου that has been omitted in Heb 10:7 does not make any significant change to the interpretation of the text. In LXX Ps 39:9, the μου is connected with ὁ θεός, which has in any case been transposed in Heb 10:7. The omission of μου from the text might be a slight oversight on the part of the author. However, an analysis of how the author of Hebrews quotes the LXX in his text is insightful. The following table<sup>23</sup> shows possible changes in word order and additions of pronouns to the LXX text in Hebrews. (Omissions and substitutions are not listed in this table.)

Hebrews	LXX (Rahlfs)	Text in Hebrews	Text in LXX (Rahlfs)
1:10	Ps 101:26	<i>σὺ κατ' ἀρχάς, κύριε, τὴν γῆν</i>	κατ' ἀρχάς <i>σὺ</i> κύριε τὴν γῆν
2:13	Is 8:17	<i>ἐγὼ ἔσομαι πεποιθὼς ἐπ' αὐτῷ</i>	<i>πεποιθὼς ἔσομαι ἐπ' αὐτῷ</i>
4:4	Gen 2:2	καὶ κατέπαυσεν <i>ὁ θεός</i> ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ	<i>ὁ</i> θεός...καὶ κατέπαυσεν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ
9:20	Ex 24:8	ἐνετείλατο πρὸς ὑμᾶς <i>ὁ θεός</i>	διέθετο <i>κύριος</i> πρὸς ὑμᾶς
10:16	Jer 38:33	<i>ἐπὶ καρδίας αὐτῶν καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν διάνοιαν αὐτῶν ἐπιγράψω αὐτούς</i>	<i>εἰς τὴν διάνοιαν αὐτῶν καὶ ἐπὶ καρδίας αὐτῶν γράψω αὐτούς</i>

<sup>23</sup> This table is not exhaustive. A list of all the quotations in Hebrews can be found in Karrer (2006, 337). (Karrer makes use of the work done by Friedrich Schröger in *Der Verfasser des Hebräerbriefes als Schriftausleger*, 1968, p251-256.) The NA Greek NT also indicates quotations through its typography by printing the quoted text in italics.

Hebrews	LXX (Rahlfs)	Text in Hebrews	Text in LXX (Rahlfs)
10:30	Deut 32:35	ἐμοὶ ἐκδίκησις, ἐγὼ ἀνταποδώσω	ἐκδίκησις ἀνταποδώσω
10:38 <sup>24</sup>	Habak 2:4	ὁ δὲ δίκαιός μου ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται <sup>25</sup>	ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεώς μου ζήσεται
12:5	Prov 3:11	υἱέ μου, μὴ ὀλιγώρει	υἱέ μὴ ὀλιγώρει

This table is not without its own textual difficulties. The text of LXX Ps 101:26 is also found in some LXX texts as being transposed to stand after τὴν γῆν; Jer 38:33 knows a LXX tradition where καρδίας is indeed replaced by διάνοιαν—although not a complete reversal as in Hebrews; and Habak 2:4 is known to have the μου transposed in at least Codex Alexandrinus<sup>26</sup>. Nevertheless, one can (with some reservation) see a tendency by the author of Hebrews to have a greater freedom with regard to pronouns. In two cases, namely Heb 1:10 and 10:38, the personal pronoun has been transposed. In a further four instances, namely Heb 2:13, twice in 10:30 and again in 12:5, the first person personal pronoun has been added to a quotation taken from the LXX text. It is clear that the omission of μου in Heb 10:7 is not an isolated occurrence. One can conclude that this omission was prompted by the transposition of ὁ θεός, since the author of Hebrews had some fluidity regarding pronouns.

### 5.3. ὁ θεός

It is plain that the author of Hebrews deliberately transposed ὁ θεός to stand before τὸ θέλημά σου in the quotation of Heb 10:7. This shift is done for more than stylistic reasons on the grounds of the author's omission of ἐβουλήθην (*contra* Ahlborn 1966, 125). Through the transposition, emphasis is placed on τὸ θέλημά σου, at the same time decreasing the

<sup>24</sup> Hab 2:4a is quoted in Heb 10:38b and Hab 2:4b quoted in Heb 10:38a. The order of these two sentences has thus completely been switched.

<sup>25</sup> Identification of quotations in a book may vary according to the definition of a quotation used. Heb 10:38 is not introduced by an introductory formula, a clear mark of being a quotation, but nevertheless it clearly uses the LXX text. However, Karrer (2006, 338) warns that in a quotation not introduced by such an introductory formula, the author of Hebrews generally “indicates a greater poetic license”.

<sup>26</sup> One should also take note of quotations of this verse in Rom 1:17 and Gal 3:11, where the μου has been completely left out.

emphasis on ὁ θεός (Ellingworth 1993, 501; Kaiser 1981, 31). The transposition, in conjunction with the omission of ἐβουλήθην, also creates an antithetic parallelism with οὐκ ἠθέλησας in verse 5 (Ellingworth 1993, 501; Thomas 1974, 314). This parallelism is effective since θέλημα and ἠθέλησας has the same root form θέλ-. Once again, the emphasis effected by the intentional change to the quotation from the LXX is on God's will. This is in line with the author's own interpretation of the quotation in Heb 10:8-10.

#### 5.4. ἐβουλήθην

Grosheide (1927, 274) and Hegermann (1988, 196) are of the opinion that the omission of ἐβουλήθην by the author of Hebrews does not affect the sense of the quotation. This view, however, is not tenable, since the omission has obvious syntactical implications. The infinitive ποιῆσαι is now made to be dependent on ἦκω<sup>27</sup> rather than ἐβουλήθην (Braun 1984, 296; Schunack 2002, 139). This indeed changes the sense of the quotation, as it has now changed from "I have come...I desired to do your will" to "I have come...to do your will". This changes the infinitive to the *purpose* of Christ's coming (Jobes 1991, 388). The clause ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ εμοῦ should be taken as parenthetical (Ahlborn 1966, 125). Although γέγραπται is closer to ποιῆσαι in the text, it makes better sense if γέγραπται is taken as an aside. "Clearly the text was changed to make the text apply directly to Jesus, who had come into the world to do the Father's will" (McCullough 1980, 369). If ποιῆσαι is to be taken with γέγραπται, this important change would not be as effective. That ποιῆσαι is to be connected with ἦκω rather than γέγραπται is also to be seen by the author's own explication of the quotation in verse 9, where he combines these two parts into one: ἰδοὺ ἦκω τοῦ ποιῆσαι τὸ θέλημά σου (deSilva 2000, 321). By doing this, ἦκω becomes a transitive verb, with ποιῆσαι denoting the purpose of Christ's coming (Attridge 1989, 274; Johnson 1980, 62; Thomas 1974, 14).

The rhetorical effect of the omission of ἐβουλήθην is emphasis (Lane 1991, 263; McCullough 1980, 369). As Ellingworth (1993, 501) notes, "Jesus...did not merely 'wish' to do God's will: he came to earth to

<sup>27</sup> Lane (1991, 263), in his commentary on this passage, chooses to connect ποιῆσαι to γέγραπται, which is in fact closer to ποιῆσαι than ἦκω in the text. Nevertheless, in his translation (Lane 1991, 254) he places the γέγραπται clause ("it is written about me in the scroll") in parenthesis. Thus, his translation also takes ποιῆσαι as dependent on ἦκω.



do it". The stress, therefore, is placed on God's will. This is further strengthened by the fact that ὁ θεός has been transposed, leaving τὸ θέλημά σου at the end of the quotation. This position places even more emphasis on God's will (Johnson 1980, 62). This is confirmed by the author's own understanding of the quotation as expounded by himself in Heb 10:8-10. His emphasis on Christ's coming *to do God's will* suits his purposes, as it even more starkly contrasts with the sacrifices which are given according to the law (*cf* Buchanan 1983, 165; Gheorghita 2003, 48).

Although the passage does relate the incarnation of Christ, and the ἥκω of LXX Ps 39:9 probably gave rise, or at least, led indirectly to the author's view of Christ "coming into the world" (εἰσερχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον) in verse 5 (Grosheide 1927, 275), this is not the central point of the passage. Of course, the existence of σῶμα in the author's *Vorlage* probably did influence his choice of text. It would not be preposterous to suggest that the author "seized upon the term" (Lane 1991, 262) or that it was "marvelously convenient and suggestive" and that "[h]e pounced on it" (Smith 1984, 122). Neither would it be fallacious to reason that finding the word σῶμα in his *Vorlage* provided him with a "proof-text for the incarnation" (Moyise 2001, 104). Nevertheless, it is clear that the crux of the argument set out by the writer himself in Heb 10:8-10 is obedience to the will of God, not sacrifice *per se*. This is also true with regard to the change in meaning of the quotation that has been caused by the omission of ἐβουλήθην. The main focus established by this omission is once again that God's will is done (Gheorghita 2003, 48; Weiss 1991, 507). This is especially so, as it is done in the last line of the quotation—where the true emphasis falls (Thomas 1974, 314). This omission is, for the author, the clincher, should there have been any doubt as to the author's interpretation of the quotation (Johnson 1980, 64). Anything not conducive to such an interpretation has been left out. This is probably also the reason why the following line of the Septuagint Psalm (καὶ τὸν νόμον σου ἐν μέσῳ τῆς κοιλίας μου) has been omitted (Ellingworth 1993, 501).

In this way, the Scriptures are made to bear on the author's argument. Christ is shown to be the subject of the Scriptures, and especially this psalm, as He is the one that utters it. This is directly due to the omission of ἠβουλήθην and the last line of LXX Ps 39:9, as this line can not be made applicable to such an interpretation (Braun 1984, 296; deSilva 2000, 321). The last line of the psalm simply does not fit with the different purposes of the author of Hebrews and the psalmist. The psalm is all about praise, while the author of Hebrews shows Christ's obedience to God through the sacrifice of his body (Braun 1984, 297). This "serves to divorce the text

from its original sense (performing God's Torah as the way to please God) and free it for its new witness to the work of Jesus" (deSilva 2000, 321). As Lane (1991, 263) remarks, the text is in this way applied even more directly to Christ.

The text has undeniably been changed, and with it, the meaning. Christ does not only wish to do God's will, but indeed carries it out. The text is not merely an abbreviation of the reading found in the LXX (Jobes & Silva 2000, 197). The psalmist, on the other hand, merely desires to do God's will. An analysis of this change, therefore, shows that it was indeed intentional and on theological grounds (Ahlborn 1966, 125).

##### 5.5. *The changes in concert*

It would be incorrect to state that the changes made to the quotation of LXX Ps 39:7-9 in Heb 10:5b-7 do not alter the interpretation of the psalm and the original meaning set forth by the psalmist (*contra* Kaiser 1981, 31). They simply do not have the same setting; LXX Ps 39 was not written to prove that the self-sacrifice of the incarnate Son of God was the ultimate act of obedience to God's will. The use of LXX Ps 39:7-9 in another text already implies an interpretation of the psalm. For the use in its new setting, the author of Hebrews saw fit to make minimal changes to the text. All of these changes serve to emphasise the point that the author of Hebrews wants to make. This emphasis is placed on the reason why Christ came (Johnson 1980, 61; Thomas 1974, 314)—in order to do God's will. At least three of the four changes to the quotation can be shown to serve this purpose, while the last can be shown to be done in consequence of these other three changes. The fact that εὐδόκησας has taken the place of ἐζήτησας can be shown to be in concordance with this statement. εὐδόκησας aids the flow of the author's argument. It is not in contradiction with the author's application of the psalm as ἐζήτησας would have been. The μου of LXX Ps 39:9 has been left out since the author has transposed ὁ θεός, and the μου probably seemed superfluous in any case. The transposition of ὁ θεός can be shown to be on the grounds of the emphasis on τὸ θέλημά σου effected by this transposition. The shift of words also has as a consequence the parallism formed by τὸ θέλημά σου and οὐκ ἠθέλησας. The last change, the omission of ἐβουλήθην, clearly places the emphasis on the will of God. If all the changes are taken together, it is clear that these changes must be intentional.

That the author deliberately chose to alter the quotation is also confirmed by the context in which the quotation is made. An analysis of Heb 10:8-10 clearly shows that the emphasis is to be placed on God's will. This is exactly what the author has done by making minute changes to the text. This helps the quotation achieve its purpose in the greater context of Hebrews. The quotation serves as another highlight in the author's argument that the old covenant has passed away (Lane 1991, 265).

The evidence points to changes intentionally made to the text by the author of Hebrews. The changes are made subtly, but not maliciously. In the words of Ellingworth (1993, 501):

It is remarkable how the author opens up the possibility of this interpretation while making minimal changes, doubtless acceptable to his first readers, to the actual wording of the quotation.

It would be wrong to accuse the author of Hebrews of misuse of Scripture. The author understood this psalm as concerning the Messiah and his sacrifice. Although the author is not interested in the setting of the psalm as it stands in the LXX (Ellingworth 1993, 500; Moyise 2001, 105), he finds meaning in it. The application of the psalm by the author preceded the changes that he made to it (McCullough 1980, 378). In fact, the changes only highlighted<sup>28</sup> what the author already understood by this piece of Scripture.

## 6. Conclusion

In a text critical study of LXX Ps 39:7-9, it is clear that at least two changes to the critical edition of Rahlfs are to be recommended. ὡτία, found in Rahlfs' text in LXX Ps 39:7, should rather be taken as σῶμα, as this reading is more likely to be original. The same goes for ἤτησας, which is more likely to have been ἐζήτησας. The *Vorlage* employed by the author of Hebrews, however, needs one more change: the plural form, ὀλοκαυτώματα, should be read in LXX Ps 39:7 instead of the singular ὀλοκαύτωμα. This *Vorlage* should rather be used in any comparison with the NT text of Hebrews. An analysis of the textual variants found in Heb 10:5-10 has shown that the text found in NA<sup>27</sup> can be taken as most probable. No changes to this text were necessary in order to compare the text of the psalm with that of Hebrews.

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<sup>28</sup> This can perhaps be compared to the use of *italics* in modern-day quotations.

The importance of establishing the *Vorlage* of Hebrews is clearly illustrated by this article. A comparison of the reconstructed text of Hebrews' *Vorlage* of LXX Ps 39:7-9 with Heb 10:5b-7 led to the discovery of four changes the author of Heb made to his *Vorlage*. These four changes differ from the four usually suggested by commentators<sup>29</sup>. For instance, the much discussed variant σῶμα / ὄτια is not among these changes.

It has further been shown that at least three of these changes were intentional. These changes serve to highlight what the author of Heb saw as important in this text. An analysis of the context and of the author's own exposition of these verses show that the changes were made not to emphasize the Messiah as such, but in order to emphasize the importance of God's will and Christ's obedience to this will.

This once again shows that the authors of the NT did not consider the act of quoting something to be done according to the scientific categories of the present day. Nor did they regard the setting of the quotation as important as present-day exegetes do. Rather, they interpreted these texts in the light of Christ and found application for them in their contemporary faith communities. The authors of the NT allowed the Scriptures<sup>30</sup> to permeate their thoughts. They knew and used these texts, viewing them as the prophetic announcement of the Christ event. However, they did not place the Scriptures on a higher level than God himself. Instead, the sacred texts point towards Him and for this reason may be highlighted (in this piece of Scripture, by subtle changes to the text) in order to do this more effectively.

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<sup>29</sup> Buchanan (1983, 165), Kaiser (1981, 31), Jobes and Silva (2000, 197), to name but three commentaries, identify the following changes: σῶμα is used instead of ὄτια; ὀλοκαυτώματα, the plural form, is used instead of ὀλοκαύτωμα, the singular; Hebrews has εὐδόκησας instead of the LXX reading (mostly taken as ἤτησας); the writer omits ἐβουλήθη and μου. Included with these changes is the fact that ὁ θεός is transposed to stand before τὸ θέλημά.

<sup>30</sup> This is, of course, not to be understood as if the OT canon was agreed upon and sacrosanct. 'Scriptures' in this sense should be viewed as a grouping of authoritative texts. The view of the authors of the NT with regard to exactly which texts these were might not agree.

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