THE PSALTER

ACCORDING TO

THE SEVENTY

That is,
The Septuagint

Ecclesiastical Text
(Third Edition)

Translated by Vivian Maria Hartley, M. A.

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Translated by Vivian Maria Hartley, M.A.

With contributions from
the Priest Lambros Kamperidis, Ph.D.,
John Hadjinicolaou, Ph.D.,
the Monk Pierre (Vachon),
and others

THE PSALTER
ACCORDING TO THE SEVENTY

(*The Septuagint*)

INTRODUCTION : [*Thoroughly noted study edition*]

The Septuagint Psalter is the Psalter in the form which the Church has received and always used from the earliest times. At the time of our Saviour and the Apostles, this was the Psalter that was in use in Judaism ; it was quoted by them in the Epistles and Gospels, and it has been the reference for all the Holy Fathers. The words of the Psalter bore connexions (references) for the mind and heart with the entire "Old Testament" and the "New Testament". The collection as a whole has always been at the heart of our worship. This is but one aspect of the unity of, and in, all the Scriptures, from the First Book of Moses to the Apocalypse, as understood by the Church, that is, by the faithful. It has been noted that at least 300 of the about 350 "Old Testament" citations in the "New Testament" are from the Septuagint. For such reasons, the Church did not accept the imposition of the Masoretic (Hebrew) text for the "Old Testament", the introduction of which was part of an attempt by the Masoretes to reduce the possible christological references seen there.

And so, we offer yet another attempt to render this Psalter for use in the English language, praying that it may be useful to the faithful. This new translation, in its third edition, with corrections, is primarily a pastoral one. It has not made direct reference to Hebrew or Syriac texts of the same textual tradition. This is for others. For this pastoral reason we follow particularly the Greek text of the Ecclesiastical Psalter. One cannot emphasise too strongly that this Septuagint Psalter, although not well-known in the twentieth/twenty-first century west, represents a legitimate alternative textual tradition of the Holy Scriptures from ancient times, as seen in the "Dead Sea Scrolls". Although another tradition is more readily and cheaply available in the popular press, what our Church has always used is important to keep in and for the heart. Furthermore, although this present offering, being in a traditional format, may be used in Church Services, it is our intention that it be easily usable by all believers in daily prayer, whether a monk, or lay Christian, as is our tradition ; it is truly an ancient practice.

We have used standard (not "common"), contemporary English to facilitate this connexion with the heart. The most common complaint heard about this usage is the familiarity it brings in addressing God as "You". This is exactly the point. The older English second person singular and familiar "Thou", which once provided the familiarity, has disappeared in modern usage ; and, when it is used, it becomes formal and remote — at least to the heart of most people. Except, perhaps, for French, all languages addressing God liturgically and scripturally use the familiar second person singular in the Orthodox Church. It is our responsibility to maintain this closeness, regardless of anyone's natural fondness for the older forms. Ironically, in modern usage, the former plural and formal "you" has now become also the singular and familiar, and performs the work of both. Some will likely remark that this present text is not especially poetic, and even rough in its English expression. If this be so, it is because we have attempted to follow the literal translation tradition which produced the Greek text, and also the subsequent Vulgate, Slavonic, and Romanian texts. And so, we offer this translation as it stands for those who will accept it, and we leave it to the Church to decide, in time, what to do with it. In this edition, as in the previous editions, there are prayers to be used before, during and after reading the Sessions and Canticles. This edition adds several other elements

at the end of the Psalms and Canticles, which are also customarily included in these Psalters, such as the Service of the Twelve Psalms and the Magnifications. Also provided are a Commemoration, that is, a long prayer of intercession, which assumes that the Psalter is being read on a daily basis ; and also the Creed of Saint Athanasius of Alexandria, and the *Te Deum* of Saint Ambrose of Milan. Besides these, there is also the Service of the Canon to the Theotokos at the Parting of the Soul from the Body, since after a death, the Psalter is read in the presence of the departed until the burial. Moreover, many more foot-notes, that include commentaries from the Fathers and others are provided, as are many more scriptural cross-references. This is to help the reader's comprehension, and to help the memory catch some of the many scriptural allusions in the words of the Psalter.

The Septuagint Bible, of which this Psalter is a part, represents a parallel textual tradition to the "Masoretic" Hebrew of the "Old Testament". In the "New Testament", it is called "The Scriptures". It is, therefore, an error to speak, as many often do, as though the Septuagint were simply a poor translation of the Hebrew. Even at the time of Christ — even thereafter — there was, in Hebrew, more than one tradition of the transmission of the text. The present Hebrew text serving for most English translations is one of these alternatives, and was chosen as their preferred textual tradition by rabbinic scholars after the sixth century A.D. Recent discoveries in the Hebrew texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls have confirmed what the Church kept in Greek for so many centuries, even though the Hebrew originals disappeared, or were altered.

Called the Septuagint (from the Latin word for seventy) because of its having been translated into Greek in third century B.C. Egyptian Alexandria by supposedly seventy-two scholars, this Greek version is longer than the "Masoretic" Hebrew version, with the books in a different order, and with many variations. It is longer, because many of its books survived only in Greek, and were not included in the Hebrew textual tradition, for whatever reason. The Latin Vulgate is longer than the Masoretic, and shorter than the Greek.

This present translation of the Psalter according to the Seventy (the Septuagint, or LXX) is primarily the work of Mrs Vivian Maria Hartley, M.A., over six years (1990-1996). Most of the subsequent editing is the work of the Monk Pierre (Vachon), and of the Priest Lambros Kamperidis, Ph.D., with contributions from John Hadjinicolaou, Ph.D., and others. Proof-reading was by the Nun Sophia (Zion), Ph.D., and others. Some consultation was made with the late Professor D James Wurtele, Ph.D. Reference has been made also to *Les Psaumes: Prières de l'Église* (1979) translated by Archimandrite Placide (Deseille), to the Psalter by Archimandrite Lazarus (Moore), to the Psalter by José de Vinck and Leonidas Contos, to the Psalms in *A New English Translation of the Septuagint* (2007), and the *Orthodox Study Bible* (2008), and also to *A Psalter for Prayer: An Adaptation of the Classic Miles Coverdale Psalter, Augmented by Prayers and Instructional Material*, edited and translated by David James (Jordanville, NY, 2011). We would like to refer one also to the patristic reference work on the Psalter done by Johanna Manley in *Grace For Grace* (1992). In addition, reference to the following works may be useful : *St. John Chrysostom, Commentary on the Psalms, Volumes 1 and 2*, Robert Charles Hill, Translator (1998) ; *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, Volumes 7 and 8*, InterVarsity Press (2008) ; *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Eerdmans Publishing Company (1989). In addition to these, many foot-notes, and some patristic comments are taken from a recent Romanian-language translation of the Bible, the work of the late Metropolitan Bartholomew of Cluj, for which we are grateful. [1] This present literal translation from Greek is trying to follow the example of the Septuagint. That text is as far as possible a literal translation from Hebrew ("which aimed at bringing the Greek reader to the Hebrew original rather than bringing the Hebrew original to the Greek reader"[2]). Some constructions are difficult in both Greek and English. This reflects the attempt to translate, as far as possible, the subtleties of Hebrew poetry. Names, and place-names are spelled in accordance with the

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[1] Sfânta Scriptura : Versiunea Anania ; Editura Institutului Biblic şi de Misiune al Bisericii al Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane (*The Institute of the Bible and of Mission of the Romanian Orthodox Church*) : Bucharest, Romania, 2001.

[2] Albert Pietersma & Benjamin G Wright (eds.), *A New English Translation of the Septuagint* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p.xiv

Greek spelling. The translation of the comments by Saint Athanasius are mostly the work of the Monk Pierre (Vachon). There are other footnoted comments, provided by the Editors. We would like to refer one also to the patristic reference work on the Psalter done by Johanna Manley. Forthcoming should be a translation by Archimandrite Ephrem (Lash), for the Patriarch of Constantinople. Some references also come from "Le français à l'usage des théologiens" by Lucreția Vasilescu (Sophia, Bucharest, 2005).

Generous reference has been made to the footnotes in the Psalter, as published by Archimandrite Lazarus (Moore). In presenting these, and all other footnotes, there is no attempt to make a definitive, or dogmatic statement about the meaning of the Psalter. Even the Fathers see things from different perspectives, according to their own lives, and situations. The comments, from whatever source, are given to help in making a reflection upon the Psalms, and applying them to life. Like Prophecy, which is fulfilled in different ways, in different generations, so the Psalms touch each of us in the midst of our lives, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, within the context of the Church's life, and tradition. For such a reason, it is not possible to prepare a complete commentary, or referencing, of the Psalter. But the footnotes may be taken as suggestions as to meanings, or intent in the text itself.

This present translation uses many verbals and verb-forms such as participles and gerunds. A relative clause might be more usual in current English. However, Hebrew is a language that expresses itself characteristically in verbs and verb-forms more than nouns and adjectives. The Greek translation retains much of this character. This particular text attempts to do so as well. Some constructions are difficult in both Greek and English, which reflects the attempt to translate, as far as possible, the subtleties of Hebrew poetry.

Another difficulty encountered in translation is the imitation in Greek of a Hebrew idiom that uses a singular noun to represent a plural. In effect, it is treated something like an English collective noun. Sometimes, when there is a singular, such as "poor one", this expression may have both a singular and a plural application at the same time. The reader must listen to the heart about this. For example, there are singulars that can also mean a plural in 2 Moses 8:2 ;[3] 2 Moses 10:13-14 ; Psalm 21:8 (head) ; Psalm 17:40 (back) ; Psalm 106:12 (heart). This applies also to words such as "righteous", "needy", "poor", "impious", *&c.*

Saint John Cassian says, about interpreting the Scriptures, and therefore especially the Psalter, that there are historical, topological, allegorical, and analogical ways in which to do this.

> *"The historical embraces the knowledge of things past and visible... the allegorical belongs to what follows, for what actually happened is said to have pre-figured the form of some mystery ... the analogical sense rises from spiritual mysteries even to still more sublime and sacred secrets of heaven ... the topological is the moral explanation .... And so these four previously mentioned figures coalesce, if we desire, in one subject, so that one and the same Jerusalem can be taken in four senses : historically, as the city of the Jews ; allegorically, as the Church of Christ ; analogically, as the heavenly city of God ; ... topologically, as the soul of man."* [4]

The difficulty in translating any poetry from language to language is evident here, too. However, some characteristics survive, even after passing through Greek to English. Hebrew poetry uses many devices that can produce unusual English constructions. *Chiasmus* is an ancient poetic technique, surviving to the present day, which uses inversions, parallelism and repetitions, to help the memory, and to focus on main points.[5] "My end is my beginning", the device of inclusion, is evident frequently, not only internally, in shorter passages, but also in

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[3] "Mōysēs"=Moses. See the Notes on Scripture Names on p.xxviii. Names and place-names are spelled in accordance with the Greek spelling.

[4] Cited by R S Dart in his *The Spirituality of John Cassian*, P. 72, published by Synaxis Press, The Canadian Publishing House, Dewdney, BC, 2006, ISBN 919-67213-2.

[5] John Breck, *The Shape of Biblical Language: Chiasmus in the Scriptures and Beyond* (Crestwood, NY: SVS Press, 1994)

the whole of a psalm. A psalm may frequently conclude with a variant of the initial material, and the main point may be found in the middle. It has been written by Father Breck and others that such a device can be found as the pattern for a whole book, such as the Gospel according to John. Our format follows the traditional format (in the form of poetry, not prose), and it is intended to help one understand more easily some of these elements. Some psalms are written as "acrostics". For example, in this case, following the Hebrew alphabet, a line or a section begins in order with consecutive letters of this alphabet. The most familiar of these is Psalm 118. In order to help the reader see this, the Hebrew letters are placed on the right margin of the pages of these acrostic psalms, and in Psalm 118 at the beginning of each section.

It is, again, to be remembered that there is more than one textual tradition for the Septuagint, as is noted frequently in the *Commentary on the Psalms* by Saint John Chrysostom. Essentially there is one text, but there are some variant readings. Although our foundation is on the Brenton text, with reference to the text of the A Rahlfs Edition, we are concerned to offer a translation which follows the text in actual ecclesiastical use. The variations from the Brenton and Rahlfs texts that are found in the Ecclesiastical Psalter are therefore integrated.

We offer only minimal verse indications for convenience, since of old there was no versification at all. We also offer at the beginning of each psalm the Greek and Latin "incipits", that is, the introductory words of the text itself in these languages. And we offer, in italics, headings by Archimandrite Placide (Deseille), who provides "christological prompts" ; because it is extremely important to be aware of the links between the text of the Psalter itself, and the "New Testament" writings. It is this Hebrew text, which in Greek translation came to be called the Septuagint, that was used and quoted by the Apostles and Evangelists (it was the same text also in Syriac, Aramaic, Coptic, Ethiopic). They could not, even had they wished to, follow the later Masoretic Hebrew text of the 6th-10th centuries A.D. (which now pretends to be the "official translation"), because it did not yet exist.

Moreover, in editing this work, we have aimed at a certain conservatism in vocabulary. We limit synonyms as far as possible, trying to keep the same English word for the same Greek word, in order to follow the Greek example of translation from Hebrew. This allows for more facile verbal links within the Psalter itself, with the rest of the "Old Testament" (the Scriptures), and with the "New Testament" which draws from and fulfils it. Nevertheless, sometimes synonyms are unavoidable. Some word-choices are motivated by a certain understanding of the links made with some words of the Psalter to modern languages and the "New Testament" by modern Greek and Slavic speakers. Other word-choices are motivated by patristic comments. In this vein it is necessary to understand that the likelihood is great that the very conservative vocabulary of the Greek Septuagint translation is a deliberate reflection of the same conservatism in the Hebrew. This itself need not be the case for any other reason than simply for ease in memorising. However, this conservatism is a central characteristic of the Septuagint, called "isomorphism" by Dr. Albert Pietersma of Toronto. Further, in previous editions, we had attempted to minimise capitalisation of words ; but we found instead that providing capitalisation often helps to give clues to some pronoun references. Such capitalisation choices could be described as helping "to know who is Who". We apologise if anyone may find this distracting.

It is our fervent hope that this rendering will allow the heart and mind more readily and easily to make the links between these psalms, the Old and New Dispensation, and worship. One main aim has been to try to enable the English reader to perceive as many as possible of the verbal links within the Psalter, and within the whole of Scripture, as would a Greek reader in Greek.

When reading the Psalter in solitude, and following the method of reading by *kathismas,* or sessions, one may begin and end readings and sessions of readings with certain prayers. These prayers are provided in the text, with some small adjustments, from the translation by the Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Ellwood City, Pennsylvania, USA.

In ancient times, in Egypt, and elsewhere, a prayer concluded each psalm, or psalm-portion. A translation from the Latin of these very old prayers is provided in this, the noted

edition.

Especially if one may read the Psalter in solitude, one ought to give at least minimal voice to the reading, as in the ancient way ; it is good for the heart. It is important to note further that "reading" the Psalter, like other reading, has for most of human history been done aloud, orally. The poignant example is that of Acts 8:28-30, and the reading by the Ethiopian Eunuch. Silent reading as we know it now is a recent change in practice. Note, by extension, that when one begins learning the "Jesus Prayer", one is exhorted always to do so by reciting the prayer aloud. We therefore anticipate, in our presentation of the Psalter, that the reader will read the psalms aloud, albeit even with the most minimal of voicing. We have, therefore, tried to assist the reader in recitation. To do this, we have provided a variety and quantity of punctuation rather greater than customary.

We are also providing the Service of the Twelve Psalms at the conclusion of the Psalter, as is often done. This service has come to us as indicated in its introduction. This service is included in some existing Psalters, and it is closely related to the method used in the Egyptian desert, and continued by both the abbots Saint John Cassian, and Saint Benedict of Nursia. These abbots give this format as a foundation for the daily, or weekly recitation of the Psalter, with the psalms being adjusted. This format of prayer, based on twelve psalms, is found in many monastic rules, up to this time.

The Psalter, in imitation of the Pentateuch, is divided into five portions or books, as will be seen in the body of the text, with the concluding of each portion in a brief doxology, as noted.

The term διάψαλμα, *diapsalma*, appears frequently in the text of the Psalter (seventy-one times in thirty-nine psalms). It translates the Hebrew סלה, *selah.* According to Genesius, the meaning is "to lift up" or "to exalt". He says it indicated an interruption or a change in the regular rendering. Genesius also says that Saint Jerome connected it with "shalom", and "amen". In some cases, it could be a musical direction for an interlude on strings. Saint Gregory of Nyssa has indicated that the translating of this word as "Pause", which we have seen in some previous English translations, is justified. In harmony with further comments by Genesius, Saint Gregory says that his inherited understanding is that *diapsalma* means "a change in understanding, appearance or activity". He says that this is a pause that comes unexpectedly in order to accommodate an additional thought which is being sent by the Lord. He further tells us that the pause is a teaching from the Holy Spirit which occurs in a mysterious way when the fresh thought interrupts the continuity of the psalm. He goes on to say that the pauses serve as markers for us to perceive that the Holy Spirit inspired the prophetic author anew in the midst of the psalmody, and that we ought to pay attention to what may not be explicitly, but implicitly expressed in the text.[6]

Saint John Chrysostom agrees about the aspect of musical direction, but he says that the word means "ever", "forever", "continuously", or "always". Cassiodorus writes that *diapsalma* indicates a break in the flow, or a change of speaker or action. The Greek translator did not include *diapsalma* when it comes at the end of a psalm (3 ; 23 ; 45). Saint Augustine explains that it is not clear whether this word is originally from Hebrew, in which case it is equivalent to "Amen" (so be it) or whether it is simply a Greek word which means "a break in singing". The "psalma" is what is sung with the psaltery, and the "dia"indicates a period of silence inserted into the singing. The "sympsalma" means a uniting of voices in the singing, so "diapsalma" would indicate a separation of those voices, where a pause or disruption of continuity is marked. Regardless, it is likely that when this word appears, the sense cannot be continued or carried on without an interruption.

Another opinion is expressed in the "New English Translation of the Psalms", by Albert Petrsmaa, who translated the psalms. He wrote that "diapsalma", since it is a word of uncertain origin and meaning, may well be translated as "interlude with strings" because it represented a pause in the musical flow (assuming this musical flow implies vocal music in particular). The strings refer to the underlying meaning of the stringed instrument, the "psaltery".

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[6] Saint Gregory of Nyssa, *Commentary on the Inscriptions of the Psalms,*
translated by Casimir McCambley (Brookline, MA: Hellenic College Press, 1999), Book 2, Chapter 10, pp. 94-95

This Psalter translation uses a convention regarding the Divine Name from the *Revised Standard Version* translation of the Bible.[7] Following the custom of the period, the unpronounceable Divine Name, when appearing in Hebrew as יהוה, *YHWH*, was pronounced instead as "*Adonai*", which was represented in the Greek as ὁ Κύριος, *ho Kyrios*, meaning "the Lord" ; and it is found here as "the LORD" in order to distinguish it from other usages of lord and lords. This Name, not pronounced from the time of Moses, is known to be a form of the verb "to be". We see it sometimes written as I AM, representing the Greek ἐγώ εἰμι, *ego eimi*. The word "God" is a translation of another Hebrew word, אל (*El*).

The primary source for word-meanings in translation is the "Greek-English Lexicon", ed. by Henry Liddell and Robert Scott ["L&S"], 7th edition (London : Oxford University Press, 1975).

The next main source is the "Analytical Lexicon to the Septuagint : Expanded Edition" by Bernard A Taylor (Peabody, MA : Hendrickson Publishers, 2009)

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[7] H G May & B M Metzger (eds.), *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha, Revised Standard Version* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), p.xiv

SAINT GREGORY OF NYSSA, AND THE PSALTER

Saint Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, as did certain other Fathers, wrote a meditative *Commentary on the Inscriptions of the Psalms.* It is a very useful supplement for the reading, praying, and studying of the Psalter. Because of the importance of this commentary, a brief summary is included in this introduction.

In this work, Saint Gregory distils for us a perception and perspective of the Fathers' understanding and approach to the Psalter, and tries to give to us our authentic inherited tradition. It is important to understand that this inherited tradition has roots not only in the Church of apostolic times, but also in the preceding rabbinic tradition. He considers that the Psalter is a pivotal aid to Christian development, enlightenment, and achievement of blessedness. And so, as he says : "Every sublime notion pertaining to God may, in my opinion, define blessedness". One should "...dutifully comply with Paul, and say that blessedness is rightly claimed as primary and takes precedence over anything else. Blessedness for men is participation in that which truly exists". Therefore "...the definition of human blessedness is likeness to God".[8]

The Psalter, he continues, in a systematic way shows the natural way to attain blessedness. "If the entire world order is a kind of musical harmony whose artisan and creator is God as the Apostle says (Heb 11.10), then man is a microcosm, an imitator of him who made the world".[9] He is at pains in another place to emphasise that the historical events described in the Psalter are not necessarily presented in an historical order, but in a theological framework which develops our relationship with God, and teaches us how to live in response to this relationship. The faithful in general have understood this, and as a result, not only have monks used the Psalter constantly (sometimes reading it unceasingly within the community), but laity also at home have been faithfully reading the Psalter.

Saint Gregory says that there is a reason why the Psalter is divided into five books. It is not just arbitrary. This division is part of its fundamental structure, and it is not connected to, nor reflected in, our method of reading the Psalter by *kathismas* (a more recently developed method). He is concerned that we be aware that in this five-book structure, we participate in a pilgrimage with the Prophet David. This pilgrimage takes us through the five books, or better, through the five stages, of our spiritual life in Christ. Besides the obvious indicators in this English text itself, which give the beginning of each book, each book also closes with an evident doxology. For the first four books, it consists of a doxological phrase distinct from the concluding psalm itself, and for the fifth, it is constituted by the whole of Psalm 150, which is also the doxological conclusion for the whole Psalter. Each doxology may be seen both as a link of praise and thanksgiving, and as a step towards understanding.

Saint Gregory tells us that the first book serves as a preface to the Psalter, and that it offers a contrast between persons "living in evil due to falsehood", and persons who have chosen the good way. The second book emphasises thirst and longing for God, for "living water". The third book "begins with a careful examination of how the justice of the divine judgement is maintained in life's inequalities".[10] The fourth book is rooted in the example of Moses, who "is no longer to be taught by the Law, but has become a teacher of the Law to others". Here, says Saint Gregory : "The prophet [David] elevates the minds of those who accompany him, for he transcended every misdirected pursuit in this life and shows that an insubstantial, deceptive spider's web in this life leads to no good for persons engaged in vain pursuits".[11] The fifth book brings us to the heights, to knowing how to evade evil and to praise God purely.

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[8] Saint Gregory of Nyssa, *op. cit.*, bk 1, ch 1, p.23

[9] Saint Gregory, *op. cit.,* bk 1, ch 3, p.29

[10] Saint Gregory, *op. cit.,* bk 1, ch 6, p.36

[11] Saint Gregory, *op. cit.,* bk 1, ch 7 (both citations), p.39, p.45

"Grace is not manifested by one means only, but it variously deals with the circumstances into which we have fallen due to our inclination toward evil".[12]

The Bishop of Nyssa also points out to us that, in reflection of the LORD, the first psalm (the *alpha*) serves as a beginning, a gate to blessedness in order to destroy evil ; and the concluding psalm (the *omega*) indicates the achievement of this in its praise of God by all that exists. The beginning of blessedness is alienation from evil.

In the second section of his book, Saint Gregory discusses the inscriptions of the psalms. Of this, we attempt the following summary, since we perceive that this, too, is an important element in approaching the psalms.

The inscriptions are not simply antiquated directions and indicators, although they have completed some of their original service. There are some differences in the presence or absence of inscriptions, and the way they are written, between the Hebrew and the Septuagint Psalters. Saint Gregory attributes the variance to the christological interpretation which the Church has placed on the inscriptions in the Septuagint, and notes that the whole Psalter is, in fact, treated in this christological manner.

Inscriptions have two purposes : First, to provide the subject of the psalm ; second, to instruct the listener. *For the end*, found before many psalms, is connected with *For the victor*,[13] and others similar. Their point is the engagement of the spiritual struggle, as an athlete, with the end or goal always in view. Through such Inscriptions as *For those who have changed ; To look for the secrets ; For the beloved, a hymn ; To sing for the return of dawn ; To have the eighth before one's eyes ; To regard the inheritance ; So that we might be of the race of Kore ; That great voice of David ;* and *Do not destroy*, we are encouraged to patience, endurance, harmony, and repentance. A *psalm* is a choral chant with a musical instrument ; a *canticle* produced by the mouth is a prayer said aloud; a *prayer* is supplication to God for benefits ; a *hymn* is a song of praise rendered to God for graces bestowed ; *praise* or *acclaim* contain praise for God's wonders. Combinations of terms like these direct us towards virtue. *Concerning the secrets of the Son*, he says, suggests a correct accurate knowledge of God ; *For her who inherits* would refer to the repentant soul ; *Concerning the morning aid* refers to the putting off of the ways of darkness, and putting on the light ; *For the eighth* refers to the fulness of the Kingdom, of the Last Day ; *For the wine vats* refers also to the laying-up of good wine (good works) for the future in the wine vat of the soul, that is the conscience ; *For Maeleth* includes the meaning *for a chorus*, and suggests a united choir in victorious gladness ; *Alleluia*, which means *Praise the Lord*, appears frequently, and is connected with the fulfilment of our journey. He points out, too, that in all the psalms, we must take notice of the continuity between adjacent psalms, and their meaning. Some psalms are introductions to what follows ; and although there may be an inverted historical order, the consecutive logic lies under the surface, to be searched out with the heart. "Your life should be a psalm not resounding with earthly utterances — thoughts are these utterances — but you should be a pure, audible sound coming from heaven above." Virtue must, moreover, be applied in life, so that by one's graceful conduct the virtue, the grace, is visible in life. He says further that because it is fallen, human nature is subject to change, that we can only become better or worse, and that change ought to be towards the divine stability. [14]

To state the matter once again, these, and many other insights of Saint Gregory, are not simply the insights of one man, but his own distillation of what he has inherited. Indeed, it is just as the Apostle says, that he only transmits what he has inherited.[15] This inheritance is the Church's perception of the involvement of our God in a saving way in the whole of history from and even before creation. It includes the understanding that the saving acts, particularly those

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[12] Saint Gregory, *op. cit.,* bk 1, ch 8, p.47

[13] These are the translations of Casimir McCambley, not of this present work.

[14] Saint Gregory, *op. cit*. Bk 2 ch 3

[15] (1 Corinthians 11:23)

associated with our salvation[16] in the Son of God, our Saviour Jesus Christ, are effective not only for the present and future, but retroactively to the past. Time is not linear by any means, and God is not limited.

Thus, in reading, praying and living the Holy Psalter, it is important to read everything in context. It is important to look at the Psalter itself as a whole, cohesive unity ; it is important to see this Psalter in the context of the surrounding "Old Testament" literature, which reveals God's saving activity with us whom He created ; it is important to see this Psalter in the context of its fulfilment in the "New Testament" ; and it is important to understand and accept the Psalter in the manner the Church has received it and used it throughout history, including reading what the Fathers say about it.

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[16] It is important to remember that "salvation" does not simply imply being rescued. Its root-word from the Latin is *salus*, meaning health. When we speak of salvation, we speak also of wholeness and health.

The following excerpts are from earlier English translations of portions of patristic writings which are usually given in the introduction to the Psalter.[17, 18]

"…St Jerome, writing from Bethlehem to Marcella, and describing the charms of the Holy Land, tells her that the singing of Psalms was universal. 'Wherever you turn the labourer at the plough sings Alleluia : the toiling reaper beguiles his work with Psalms : the vine-dresser as he prunes the vine with his curved pruning-hook sings something of David's. These are the songs of this province [*Palestine*] : these, to use the common phrase, are its love ditties : these the shepherd whistles ; these are the labourer's implements'".

"St Chrysostom … thus describes the universality of the use of the Psalms in his day, 'If we keep vigil in the church, David comes first, last, and midst. If early in the morning we seek for the melody of hymns, first, last, and midst is David again. If we are occupied with the funeral solemnities of the departed, if virgins sit at home and spin, David is first, last, and midst. O marvellous wonder. Many who have made but little progress in literature, many who have scarcely mastered its first principles, have the Psalter by heart. Nor is it in cities and churches alone that at all times, through every age, David is illustrious ; in the midst of the forum, in the wilderness, and uninhabitable land, he excites the praises of God. In monasteries, amongst those holy choirs of angelic armies, David is first, midst, and last. In the convents of virgins, where are the bands of them that imitate Mary ; in the deserts, where are Men crucified to this world, and having their conversation with God, first, midst, and last is he. All other Men are at night overpowered by natural sleep : David alone is active ; and congregating the servants of God into seraphic bands, turns earth into heaven, and converts Men into angels'".

"When men and women, forsaking their ordinary callings, dedicated their lives to devotion and prayer in monasteries and communities, the singing of Psalms formed a large part of their religious exercises. In the course of time the recitation of the Psalter became a clerical obligation as well. Various schemes or uses were drawn up. Fixed Psalms were generally assigned to certain of the canonical hours, while at the other services the remainder of the Psalms were recited 'in course'…."

"In this way a portion of the Psalms nearly equal in amount to twice the whole Psalter was recited every week. But many instances are quoted of holy Men who recited it much more frequently. It is said that St Patrick, the Apostle to Ireland, in the fifth century, repeated it daily ; St Maurus, the disciple of St Benedict, and Alcuin, the famous instructor of Charles the Great, did the same. St Kentigern, Bishop of Glasgow, in the sixth century, went through it every night. Bede relates how Ecgbert, a young student of noble birth at an Irish monastery, when attacked by the plague, vowed that if he recovered he would recite the whole Psalter daily in addition to the ordinary canonical hours, as a memorial of praise to God…."

"St Athanasius, in his *Epistle to Marcellinus on the Interpretation of the Psalms,* the whole of which well deserves study, writes thus : 'They seem to me to be a kind of mirror for everyone who sings them, in which he may observe the motions of the soul, and as he observes them give utterance to them in words. He who hears them read, takes them as if they were spoken specially for him. Stricken in his conscience he repents, or hearing of hope in God, and of the grace which is given to those who believe, he rejoices as if this grace were promised to him in particular, and begins to thank God…. He who genuinely studies all that is written in this book of Divine inspiration may gather, as out of a paradise, that which is serviceable for his own

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[17] We apologise for the lack of page numbers for these citations.

[18] Dr A F Kirkpatrick, ed., *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, Psalms* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1903), Introduction

need. Methinks that in the words of this book you may find an accurate survey and delineation of the whole life of Man, the dispositions of the soul, and the movements of the mind. If a man has need of penitence and confession, if affliction or temptation has overtaken him, if he has been persecuted or has been delivered from the plots of his enemies, if he is in sorrow or trouble, or if he wishes to praise and give thanks and bless the LORD, he finds instruction in the Psalms.... If you meditate on these things and study the Psalms, you shall be able, under the guidance of the Spirit, to grasp their meaning ; and you shall emulate the life of the divinely inspired Men who uttered these words'".

"...St Basil, in the introduction to his Homily on the First Psalm :[19]

'All Scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable, for it was written by the Spirit to the end that as it were in a general hospital for souls, we human beings might each select the medicine for his own disease.... The prophets provide one kind of instruction, the historians another, the law yet another, and the exhortations of the Proverbs yet another. But the Book of Psalms contains that which is profitable in all of them. It prophesies of the future ; it recalls history ; it legislates for life ; it suggests rules of action ; in a word it is a common storehouse of good doctrines, providing exactly what is expedient for everyone.... A Psalm is the calm of souls, the arbiter of peace : it stills the stormy waves of thought. It softens the angry spirit, and sobers the intemperate. A Psalm cements friendship : it unites those who are at variance ; it reconciles those who are at enmity. For who can regard as an enemy the man with whom he has joined in lifting up one voice to God ? Psalmody, therefore, provides the greatest of all good things, even love, for it has invented concerted singing as a bond of unity, and fits the people together in the concord of one choir. A Psalm puts demons to flight ; it summons the angels to our aid ; it is a weapon in the midst of alarms by night, a rest from toils of day ; it is a safeguard for babes, a decoration for adults, a comfort for the aged, a most befitting ornament for women. It makes deserts populous and market-places sane. It is an initiation to novices, growth to those who are advancing, confirmation to those who are being perfected. It is the voice of the Church ; it gladdens festivals, it creates godly sorrow. For a Psalm calls forth tears even from a stony heart. A Psalm is the employment of angels, heavenly converse, spiritual incense.... What may you not learn thence ? The heroism of courage ; the integrity of justice ; the gravity of temperance ; the perfection of prudence ; the manner of repentance ; the measure of patience ; in a word every good thing you can mention. Therein is a complete theology ; the prediction of the advent of Christ in the flesh, the threatening of judgement, the hope of resurrection, the fear of chastisement, promises of glory, revelations of mysteries : all, as in some great public storehouse, are treasured up in the Book of Psalms'".

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Following are further excerpts from Saint Athanasius' *Letter to Marcellinus on the Psalms*, in addition to the previous citation.[20]

"...Among all the books, the Psalter has certainly a very special grace, a choiceness of quality well worthy to be pondered ; for, besides the characteristics which it shares with others, it has this peculiar marvel of its own, that within it are represented and portrayed in all their great variety the movements of the human soul. It is like a picture, in which you see yourself portrayed and, seeing, may understand and consequently form yourself upon the pattern given...you learn about *yourself*. You find depicted in it all the movements of your soul,

[19] In one or another form, these words of Saint Basil the Great are used in Greek Church Psalters, in the introduction, for edification.

[20] *St Athanasius on the Psalms* (London: Mowbray and Co., 1949)
We apologise for the lack of page numbers.

all its changes, its ups and downs, its failures and recoveries. Moreover, whatever your particular need or trouble, from this same book you can select a form of words to fit it, so that you do not merely hear and then pass on, but learn the way to remedy your ill. Prohibitions of evil-doing are plentiful in Scripture, but only the Psalter tells you how to obey these orders and refrain from sin. Repentance, for example, is enjoined repeatedly ; but to repent means to leave off sinning, and it is the Psalms that show you how to set about repenting, and with what words your penitence may be expressed.…"

"…With this book, however, though one does read the prophecies about the Saviour in that way, with reverence and with awe, in the case of all the other Psalms it is as though it were one's own words that one read ; and any one who hears them is moved at heart, as though they voiced for him his deepest thoughts.… And each one sings the Psalms as though they had been written for his special benefit, and takes them and recites them, not as though someone else were speaking or another person's feelings being described, but as himself speaking of himself, offering the words to God as his own heart's utterance, just as though he himself had made them up.… Briefly, then, if indeed any more is needed to drive home the point, the whole divine Scripture is the teacher of virtue and true faith, but the Psalter gives a picture of the spiritual life.…"

"…When, therefore, the Psalms are chanted, it is not from any mere desire for sweet music but as the outward expression of the inward harmony obtaining in the soul, because such harmonious recitation is in itself the index of a peaceful and well-ordered heart.… For a soul rightly ordered by chanting the sacred words forgets its own afflictions and contemplates with joy the things of Christ alone. So then, my son, whoever reads this Book of Psalms take the things in it quite simply as God-inspired ; and let each select from it, as from the fruits of a garden, those things of which he sees himself in need. For I think that in the words of this book all human life is covered, with all its states and thoughts, and that nothing further can be found in man. For no matter what you seek, whether it be repentance and confession, or help in trouble and temptation or under persecution, whether you have been set free from plots and snares or, on the contrary, are sad for any reason, or whether, seeing yourself progressing and your enemy cast down, you want to praise and thank and bless the LORD, each of these things the Divine Psalms show you how to do, and in every case the words you want are written down for you, and you can say them as your own.…"

"…Let each one, therefore, who recites the Psalms have a sure hope that through them God will speedily give ear to those who are in need. For if a man be in trouble when he says them, great comfort will he find in them ; if he be tempted or persecuted, he will find himself abler to stand the test and will experience the protection of the LORD, who always defends those who say these words. By them too a man will overthrow the devil and put the fiends to flight. If he have sinned, when he uses them he will repent ; if he have not sinned, he will find himself rejoicing that he is stretching out towards the things that are before and, so wrestling, in the power of the Psalms he will prevail. Never will such a man be shaken from the truth, but those who try to trick and lead him into error he will refute ; and it is no human teacher who promises us this, but the Divine Scripture itself.… Dæmons fear the words of holy Men and cannot bear them ; for the LORD Himself is in the words of the Scripture and Him they cannot bear, as they showed when they cried out to Christ.… Well knew the holy Psalmist that, when he said in Psalm 118, 'I will meditate upon Thy judgements ; and I will not forget Thy words' ; and again, 'Thy statutes were my songs in the place of my sojourning.' For with these words they all worked out their own salvation, saying, 'If Thy law were not my meditation, then had I perished in my humiliation.' Paul also strengthened his

disciple with like words, saying, 'Ponder these things, abide in them, that thy progress may be manifest.' And so you too, Marcellinus, pondering the Psalms and reading them intelligently, with the Spirit as your guide, will be able to grasp the meaning of each one, even as you desire. And you will strive also to imitate the lives of those God-bearing saints who

spoke them at first".

[*In one or another form, these words of Saint Basil the Great are used in Greek Church Psalters, in the introduction, for edification.*]

Saint Augustine recommends that we pray the psalms in accordance with the nature of each psalm. Therefore, if the psalm is one of prayer, then we pray ; if it is one of groaning, then we groan ; if it is joyful, then we rejoice ; if it is hopeful, then we hope ; if it shows fear, then we sense that fear. Everything in the psalter is as a mirror of ourselves.

About prophecy and speaking by the Holy Spirit :

Acts 1:6 ; Acts 4:25 ; Psalm 2:1-2 ; Hebrews 4:7 ; Matthew 22:43 ; Mark 12:36.
2 Timothy 3:16 ; 1 Peter 1:10-12 ; 2 Peter 1:20-21 ; the Nicene Creed (Symbol of Faith).

Saint Athanasius to Marcellinus :
Saint Athanasius refers to the psalms and to his conversations with a studious old man who had devoted much attention to the Psalter. He recalled this man's comments that the words of the psalms with regard to our Saviour are found in many other places in the Scriptures. He said that one interpretation is common to them all, and they all have only one voice in the Holy Spirit.

now desire to pronounce these God-inspired psalms, which the Holy Spirit placed upon the lips of David

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Words about reading the Psalter

There are many different customs in reading the Psalter. One might read the Psalter in its entirety daily, as some have done, and some do. The prayers concluding each session anticipate the private, personal recitation of the Psalter. In some monasteries, the Psalter is read continuously, in turns, non-stop. Communally, it is usually read by a reader or readers, and by sessions, once through the week, according to the accustomed usage as shown in the included table, during the daily services. It may, as was historically done, be read according to the divisions of the Five Books, which imitate the five books of the Pentateuch of Moses. It may also be read antiphonally, as has been historically done. In this form, either the reader or readers of one side read the first part of a sentence, and the reader or readers of the other side read the last part of the sentence ; or this may be done whole-sentence by whole-sentence. How it is read in any one place, at any time, is dependent upon the blessing of the local authority, competent to direct such things. Always, as in everything, one must seek the blessing from someone in authority, or a spiritual superior, or one of experience, to enter any discipline.

In the Third Edition of the Psalter According to the Seventy, the poetic structure of the psalms was kept and made clear by its presentation. However, in this version, with its highly-expanded notations, the words of the psalms have been presented in prose-form in order to conserve space. In order to indicate the original poetic nature of the psalms, slashes (/) have been inserted to indicate the end of each poetic line.

✠ Saint Athanasius of Alexandria cited an old friend of his, who showed clearly that we find in the Old Covenant books a similar prophetic preparation for our Saviour Jesus Christ in them all. They all have the one voice in the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, he says, just as the Psalter contains the special subjects of all the other books, so also the other books often contain some special feature of the Psalter. For instance, Moses and Isaiah write a song, and Habakkuk offers a prayer in the form of song. Similarly, in every book there are indications of prophecy, law-giving and history. He again reminds us that the Holy Spirit is in all the writings, and that while being the one Holy Spirit, He is revealed in many different ways according to the need of the moment. He shows us that prophets not only prophesy, but they also provide historical details and give laws. The Grace of the one Holy Spirit is common to each and every writer of all the books of the Holy Scriptures. What is unique about the Psalter, though, is that while these poetic, prophetic and historical elements are present, it is possible for the reader when reading these psalms to feel as though the words are one's own words as well.

✠ Saint Athanasius informs us that because the Book of Psalms has so many uses and applications in our lives, and particularly as an aid in repentance, it is important that the psalms not merely be said, but rather that they be sung with melody (he includes the Biblical Odes). The singing is not for æsthetic purposes, but for the profit of our own souls. The singing helps us to express our love to God as strongly as possible. It also helps to unify our very being as we focus, and gives us a clear contrast to the disharmony of our daily lives. The melody then expresses our inner harmony. He then comments that the soul which has become well-ordered as a result of chanting the holy words of the psalms will forget its suffering and afflictions, and it contemplates only the things of Christ.

✠ Saint Athanasius urges us as we read the Psalter to regard the psalms as God-inspired, and to take from them what we need in each situation, since in the Psalter all human life is addressed. Everything we need for our life is in the psalms. However, he strictly cautions all not in any way to alter the Psalter or the order of

the psalms, nor to add to them. He insists that they must be sung and chanted in their simplicity, so that those who wrote them may join their praises, prayers and intercessions with ours. To underline the importance of having such confidence in the Divinely-inspired Scriptures, Saint Athanasius cites the testimony of an old and wise man that, in old times in Israel, demons were expelled simply by the reading of the Scriptures, and likewise plots by them against humans were uncovered. He therefore strongly cautions us against neglecting the Scriptures, and he supplies us with a series of scriptural examples for our encouragement :
The Hand of the Lord was on the Porphet Elisha, and he prophesied about the waters to three kings when the minstrel played and sang according to his direction (4 Kingdoms 3:15) ; demons fear the words of holy men, and they cannot be rthem ; for the Lord Himself is in the words of the Scriptures, and they cannot bear Him, as they showd in their reaction to our Saviour in Matthew 8:29 and Luke 8:28 ; furthermore, we see that the demons were suject to our Lord's disciples in 10:17 ; the Apostle Paul commanded the unclean spirits in Acts 16:18 ; in Acts 19, there is a series of demonstrations of the spiritual authority exercised in Christ by the Apostle Paul ; the Apostle Paul exhorted his disciple Timothy to ponder the Holy Scriptures as we see in 1 Timothy 4:15 ; repeatedly in Psalm 118, the Prophet David affirms that he will mediate on the statutes of the Lord, and he insists in verse 92 that "*if it were not that Your law is my rumination, then I would have perished in my humiliation*".

Considerable reference has been made to the on-line version of the Scriptures as prepared over a long life-time by Metropolitan Bartholomew (Anania) (†2011), the Metropolitan of Cluj, Alba, Crişana and Maramureş in Romania. It was published by the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate in 2001. This publication, "The Holy Scriptures, Ananias Version", us available in Romanian in print form.
It is available digitally in Romanian at: http://www.dervent.ro/biblia.php.
This digital edition is likewise replete with scriptural cross-references and patristic references.

(Vafeidis) Archimandrite Aimilios of Simonopetra, "Psalms and the Life of Faith" (Athens, Greece : Indictos – Holy Convent of the Annunciation, 2015)

PREFACE
to the “Anania” edition of the Holy Scriptures.
by Patriarch Teoctist of Romania

The Bible or Holy Scripture is the book that God says through the mouth of His Holy Prophet Moses, “it is not just an empty promise to you, but it is your own life, and the word that you long-days ...” (5 Moses 32, 47). The same truth we then discover it very Son of God incarnate for us, our Lord Jesus Christ, when He said to his disciples: “The words that I have spoken unto you, they are spirit and are life” (John 6, 63) . So to understand the Church since its foundation, the day of Pentecost, the place and role of Scripture in her life honoring her as the living Word and for our salvation worker of God. Liturgical, theological, spiritual life, iconography, in short lifetime Orthodox Church is a divine fruitfulness of Holy Scripture, as it was given to us by the Holy Apostles, and interpreted by the deepest known plinitori zealous of its teachings : Fathers.

In our Romanian Orthodox Church, the communion of the faithful care dreptmăritori unearthly beauty and spiritual benefit of all divine Word in their own language, there was early compared to other Christian nations. Leading diligence and talented translators biblical writings were always located hierarchs scholars who have devoted time and skill this sacred endeavor, adding asceticism ascetic, leaving us as a priceless legacy since the eighteenth century, the entire Bible in Romanian dialect, known edition of the Bible of 1688, Serban's Bible or Bible from Bucharest.

To achieve this unique monument of our faith dreptmăritoare, and Romanian culture, worthy of interpreters have taken the "light and other dentr-old is full of legends," but taking as a basis of the translation text "at Eline of the 70 teachers' ie the Septuagint. A witness worthy of mention in this sense is a printing activity deacon Coresi which to spread the word divine writing and Romanians in Transylvania, was able to print from Drastic, in 1582, books in the Old Testament, in a script known as Drastic levels of the and a Liturghier in 1570. Thirst of faith and Romanian language led him and the famous Metropolitan Simeon Stefan, known and gifted translator of biblical text, print in 1648 for the first time the New Testament in its entirety. In the second Predoslovie Romanian translation of this first full New Testament confessed thought worthy of all attentive "We derept why we forced den as I could, to izvodite as înțăleagă all." This confession springs from the fulfillment of a cherished dream for all sons Romanian believers who are outside of the right to worship their parents sought the Romanian keep writing as a treasure of their being. But the New Testament of Alba Iulia, as the Bible of Bucharest, crowned years of copyists working in monasteries and villages, skilled builders manuscripts in Romanian, which are, for the time, spread over Romanian lands. It is therefore clear that Bucharest Bible was the foundation of the other editions that have followed, thus satiation of thirst for the living water of the Divine Word in the language of the Romanian people becoming richer and more lithe her literary development. In serving this purpose, ventured to interpret Scripture in Romanian and impressive religious figures of the past century, and fully dormant happiness Romanian Patriarch Nicodemus Munteanu (1939-1948), professor of theology priest Gregory Pisculescu (Galaction) - point and academician and professor of theology scholar Radu Vasile.

After the appearance in 1914 the Holy Synod of the Bible, so called because the translation was made even members of the Holy Synod of our Church, the instigation and with the care of the first Patriarch of Romania - Miron Cristea (1925-1939) was published a new edition of the Holy Bible in 1936, the translation was done by the three major religious figures mentioned above.

In 1938, appear in a state publishing house translated Bible teachers Galaction priests and

Radu Vasile, and in 1944 a new edition of the Holy Bible synodal see the light, its translation mostly belonging to former Bishop Nicodemus Munteanu at time high in service and dignity of Patriarch of Romania.

A very special care to spreading Light divine Scripture - in times of fierce persecution of the Christian faith in our country - has ever turned our memorable predecessor, Patriarch Justinian Marina (1948-1977), during which were published arhipăstoririi two editions of the Bible (1968, 1975), both by a circulation of 100,000 copies. The New Testament was printed during the same worthy arhipăstoririi Patriarch of Romania in a number of 125,000 copies. The time arhipăstoririi Patriarch blessed sleep fully lustin (1977-1986), a new edition of the Holy Bible (1982) was printed in an edition of 100,000 copies, and the New Testament with a circulation of 110,000 copies.

Since 1988, when he published a new edition of the Bible, in collaboration with the United Bible Societies and an initial print run of 100,000 copies, the Bible was reprinted 11 times, total circulation of this edition counting until the day Today, more than 380,000 copies. The New Testament was printed also in this period, with a circulation of 120,000 copies. You should not overlook the fact that in addition to all these edits and reprints of the full text of Sacred Scripture, constantly in our Church were printed in proper circulation and religious needs of the faithful servants dreptmăritori Little Bible, Gospel, Apostle, Psalter.

Such labors fully biblical writings bring closer to understanding children of our church to the building on their inner rock the strong faith in Christ light, were added in recent years and zeal, like that of toilers above commemorated, the Holiness Bartholomew Archbishop of Vad, Feleac and Cluj, who accomplished a work that seemed beyond the power of one man: namely, a new version of the Holy Bible in Romanian, revised version after the Septuagint, written and richly commented High His Holiness.

This new edition of the Holy Bible in Romanian, called the synodical decision no. 255/2001 "jubilee edition of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church" brings facilitation offered introductions to biblical books, the abundance of notes and comments clarifying the sacred text, method, so necessary in our time by offering believers proselytizing tendencies with aggression, and incorrect interpretation of the Holy Scriptures.

All this is the culmination of a life's struggles preabinecunoscut theologian, literary, poet and editor - as was the director of the Bible and Orthodox Mission - personality who serves as our Church hierarch, who brought a new spirit and fresh life church not only within one of our most important dioceses, but also in the whole field Romanian Orthodoxy.

With these thoughts, blessed with joy unspeakable entitled and appearance of this new edition of the Holy Bible, Holiness Bartholomew izvodite the glory of God in the Trinity praised him toward a facilitated and near the true meaning of the Scriptures pricinuitoare salvation and divine, work all the more necessary and more precious today, how have multiplied beyond measure those who, according to the Apostle, "ignorant and uncured wrest ... to their destruction "(2 Ptr ??3, 16).

TEOCTIST
Romanian Orthodox Church



THE PSALTER
ACCORDING TO
THE SEVENTY
(*The Septuagint*)

Numbering of *kathismas* (sessions) : Septuagint numbering

Session :	1	**Psalms :**	1 - 8
(*Kathisma*)	2		9 - 16
	3		17 - 23
	4		24 - 31
	5		32 - 36
	6		37 - 45
	7		46 - 54
	8		55 - 63
	9		64 - 69
	10		70 - 76
	11		77 - 84
	12		85 - 90
	13		91 - 100
	14		101 - 104
	15		105 - 108
	16		109 - 117
	17		118
	18		119 - 133
	19		134 - 142
	20		143 - 150

Book	I	**Psalms**	1 - 40
Book	II	**Psalms**	41 - 71
Book	III	**Psalms**	72 - 88
Book	IV	**Psalms**	89 - 105
Book	V	**Psalms**	106 - 150

Comparison of Septuagint and Hebrew numbering :

Septuagint Psalms	Hebrew Psalms
1-8	1-8
9	9-10
10-112	11-113
113	114-115
114	116 vv. 1-9
115	116 vv. 10-19
116-145	117-146
146	147 vv. 1-11
147	147 vv. 12-20
148-150	148-150

Notes on Scripture Names

Many of the traditional English translations of the Psalter are often a verse behind (or a number less) because they do not count the superscription (inscription) as being a verse.

Here, and elsewhere, "ō" indicates a Greek "ω", that is, "omega".

Here and elsewhere, "ē" indicates a Greek "η", that is, "eta".

In the Septuagint Psalter, the versification begins with the inscription on the Psalm. This causes a numerical difference in the psalms from the versification of the usual English translations. Such English translations are generally one behind the Septuagint.

Throughout the Old Testament text, it sometimes occurs that the versification of the Septuagint is different by one number from the number that we usually expect in English. However, since the textual differences from the Hebrew Masoretic text can sometimes be very substantial and the numbering can be completely unrelated, it can require a wider search to find a similar text.

In other Orthodox cultures, the names and spellings of the Scriptural names and places more closely reflect the Greek.

The Greek translation from Hebrew of proper names and place-names is imitated here in English. Many names and place-names and titles may appear unfamiliar to the English reader, accustomed to different, and western spellings and usages ; however, most of the Orthodox world is accustomed to these spellings and namings. Indeed, in some older English translations, one may see indications of these very spellings. Therefore, be aware that, in this text, there are Scripture ("Old Testament") references such as the following :

Genesis = 1 Mōysēs* (First Book of Moses).

Exodus = 2 Mōysēs (Second Book of Moses).

Leviticus = 3 Mōysēs (Third Book of Moses).

Numbers = 4 Mōysēs (Fourth Book of Moses).

Deuteronomy = 5 Mōysēs (Fifth Book of Moses).

Joshua = Jēsous = Jesus (meaning "the Lord rescues", or "saves").

1 & 2 Samuel = 1 & 2 Kingdoms.

1 & 2 Kings = 3 & 4 Kingdoms.

1 & 2 Chronicles = 1 & 2 Paraleipomenon (*i.e.* Supplements).

Ezra

Nehemiah

Esther

Job

Psalms

Proverbs

Ecclesiastes

Song of Solomon

Isaiah

Jeremiah

Lamentations

Ezekiel

Daniel

Hosea

Joel

Amos

Obadiah

Jonah

Micah

Nahum

Habakkuk

Zephaniah

Haggai

Zechariah

Malachi

Tobit

Judith

Additions to Esther

Wisdom of Solomon

Ecclesiasticus (Sirach)

Baruch with the Letter of Jeremiah

1 Maccabees

2 Maccabees

Additions to Daniel : [15]

The Prayer of Azariah and Song of the Three Holy Children

Story of Susanna

Bel and the Dragon

1 Esdras/3 Esdras[16]

2 Esdras/4 Esdras (in an appendix to the Slavonic Bible)

Prayer of Manasseh

3 Maccabees

4 Maccabees (in an appendix to the Greek Bible)

Psalm 151 (in the Septuagint)

Odes (First Ode of Moses (Exodus 15:1–19) ; Second Ode of Moses (Deuteronomy 32:1–43) ; Prayer of Anna, the Mother of Samuel (1 Samuel 2:1–10) ; Prayer of Habakkuk (Habakkuk 3:2–19) ; Prayer of Isaias (Isaiah 26:9–20) ; Prayer of Jonah (Jonah 2:3–10) ; Prayer of Azariah (Daniel 3:26–45, a deuterocanonical portion) ; Song of the Three Young Men (Daniel 3:52–88, a deuterocanonical portion) ; The Magnificat; Prayer of Mary the Theotokos (Luke 1:46–55) ; Benedictus Canticle of Zachariah (Luke 1:68–79) ; Canticle of Isaiah (Isaiah 5:1–9) ; Prayer of Hezekiah (Isaiah 38:10–20) ; Prayer of Manasseh, King of Judah when he was held captive in Babylon (ref. in 2 Chronicles 33:11–13 and appears also as a separate deuterocanonical book) ; Nunc dimittis, Prayer of Simeon (Luke 2:29–32) ; Gloria in Excelsis Deo (Great Doxology) ; Canticle of the Early Morning (some lines

from Luke 2:14)).

* The English expression of these books is not yet stable, and the reader may prefer to pronounce names and place-names in the manner of custom in the west. It is nevertheless important to know what is the customary nomenclature of most of the Orthodox world.

Abbakoum=Habakkuk	Abessalom = Absalom
Daniēl=Daniel	Abraam = Abraham
Ēsaias=Isaiah	Bersabee = Bathsheba
Ezekias=Hezekiah	Foreign Tribes = Philistines
Galaad = Gilead	Geth = Gath
Hezekiah=Ezekias	Hōsēe=Hosea
Iazēr=Jaazer, Jazer	Idithoun = Jeduthun
Idoumæa = Idoumaia, Idumæa, Edom	
Iezekiēl=Ezekiel	Jōnas=Jonas
Ioudas=Judah, Judas, Yehuda	
Jeremias=Jeremiah	Kadès = Kadesh
Kham = Egypt, Ham	Khoreb = Horeb = Sinai
Manassé = Menasseh	Mikhaias=Micah
Naoum=Nahum	Nephthali = Naphthali
Ourias = Uriah	Salōmōn=Solomon
Seirakh=Sirach	Sikima = Shechem
Siōn=Zion	Zabulun = Zebulun
Zechariah or Zachariah=Zakharias	

Consult the Introduction to The Orthodox Study Bible (St Athanasius Academy of Orthodox Theology, Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2008), p.vii, for the order of the books. In this text, other spelling-differences are foot-noted when they first appear. An initial "J" is in Greek "I". "Æ" or "æ" is usually "ai" in Greek. "Kh" or "kh" is used mostly for Greek "X" or "x". "Y" is used for the Greek "u", except in "David" and "Levi", where the "v" is for the Greek "u".

Regarding Scripture references in the Introduction and the foot-notes :

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[THE END OF THE INTRODUCTION]