INTRODUCTIONS TO THE LXX PENTATEUCH:
KEEPING THINGS UPDATED

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Close study of the various LXX/Log documents and traditions requires great attention to detail. In most instances there are a plethora of extensive Greek manuscripts (early “uncials” or “majuscules,” and later “cursives” or “minuscules”), plus smaller fragments, especially of papyri still being discovered and/or published.¹ And there are always derivative versions, in various languages not all of which can be expected to be managed adequately by any single scholar, even when editions are available. The indirect witnesses containing excerpts, such as lectionaries and catenae, can complicate matters even more, while more remote and often less formal textual pieces with explicit and implicit quotations and verbal allusions can be as revealing as they are frustrating or problematic.

Editing such materials traditionally employs a variety of special symbols and coded terms to describe the various situations. Fortunately these are fairly standard in the published editions, although to inexperienced eyes viewing a crowded textual apparatus they can be quite mysterious or confusing. Checking the introduction and/or any summary page

or card with a list of sigla may not help too much, since many of the standard explanations are in Latin (and/or Greek).

Similarly distressing especially for younger scholars with underdeveloped modern language skills is to find the introductory discussions in a language that is uncomfortable for them such as German or Latin (e.g., for some English speakers). It was a combination of all these factors that led the staff of the CATSS (Computer Assisted Tools for Septuagint Studies) textual variants project to inquire whether John Wevers, editor of the Göttingen Septuagint volumes of the Pentateuch, might have available in English his introductions that originally were published in German. Unfortunately the answer was no, but fortunately Professor Wevers graciously agreed to use some of his retirement time to perform that service. So now we have English introductions to each of the Pentateuchal Greek editions freely available on the CATSS web site, able to be consulted, and updated, as needed.

The task was not without complications. Professor Wevers had prepared his materials on a pre-Windows version of the Nota Bene scholarly editing package—an excellent choice at the time, but significantly different in its newer Windows versions—and continued to work in that older format, which was available and familiar to him. But in order to make the introductions work as we wished on the internet, in files that could display attractively, could include links to other electronic materials, and could be updated easily, everything needed to be transformed from the older Nota Bene codes into HTML (HyperText Markup Language) and suitable UniCode for the Greek and other non-Latin fonts. Some of this makeover could be done automatically, fortunately, but because of the complex number and nature of the superscripts, subscripts, and other font changes in the files, the final touches needed individual attention. Thus the English Introductions to Genesis and Exodus were done to some extent by hand (search and replace procedures) by myself and one of my student workers, Hunter Powell (Westminster Theological Seminary). Additional automatic manipulation was made possible by Stephen Siebert, the father of Nota Bene, when we brought our problem to his attention. Final online versions

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