

2. The Latin Versionsa. The Old Latin Version

Apparently this was a product of the church in North Africa about 150 AD or slightly earlier. The history is not clear but the Latin quotations from Cyprian, Tertullian, etc., represent this text and it must have been widely known and used. We have some more recent mss of this version, through the writings of persons using it, but no really "old" copies of the full text. The translation seems to be one of oral and liturgical source rather than a carefully plotted and executed work. It was not found suitable for the established teaching of the Latin churches and had to give place to a better translation as Latin displaced Greek.

b. The Vulgate

The term "vulgate" means "popular" in a very rough sense. This was to be the bible of the people and the church.

(1) History Jerome prepared the Vulgate at the suggestion of Pope Damasus, about 384 AD. Jerome was an argumentative chap who made textual studies a way of life. He went behind the LXX and learned Hebrew thoroughly that his work might be based on the original...this as a result of his seeing the problems in the LXX text and thinking them irreconcilable to the Hebrew. Jerome not only learned Hebrew, but consulted scholars, documents such as the Hexapla, and took advantage of everything else that was needed and available for such a work. His work was painstakingly careful and is actually one of the great translations of literature. He was opposed to the inclusion of the "apocryphal" books with the sacred Scriptures, but bowed to an order from the Bishop of Rome, whom he served as secretary, and quickly translated them...thus giving the Vulgate Apocrypha a "hurried" look.

(2) Serviceability

With the exception of the Psalter, the Vulgate was based on the Hebrew Old Testament. Jerome used the LXX psalter, he feeling an inadequacy at that point. The work was widely used and promoted. It became the "official" Bible of the Roman communion at the Council of Trent in the 16th century. At that time it was given canonical stance and the version known as the