What is the Septuagint?

On the 8th of Tebet, approximately in the year 260 b.c.e., in Alexandria, Egypt, King Ptolemy ordered 72 Jewish scholars, six for each tribe, to translate the Tora (the five Books of Moshe or Pentateuch) into Greek. King Ptolemy sought to disprove the existence of a unified Jewish interpretation of the Tora and thus having an excuse to delegitimize the Jewish tradition, humiliate the Jews and seek their hellenization. To this effect, the Jewish scholars were placed in separate workrooms. Yet, miraculously, they all translated every word of the Tora in the same exact way.

This translation of the Tora is known as the Septuagint (in Latin, "seventy"). Although it was done by prominent Rabbis, the Septuagint is NOT considered a translation which follows rabbinical tradition (The official Jewish translation of the Tora is the Targum Onqelos , aka "Targum Didan", done ca. 100 c.e.).

As explained in the Talmud Yerushalmi (Megila 9), in many cases the authors of the Septuagint deliberately deviated from the traditional Jewish understanding of the Tora and adapted the Biblical text to the Greek mentality and sensitivities to please the King and avoid a situation of danger for the Jews. One example: instead of translating literally "In the beginning created God", they wrote: "God created in the beginning". Why? Because for the Greek mentality the first word of a sentence would be considered its main subject. Had they translated "In the beginning created God" it would have been understood by the Greeks as if a god called "bereshit", ("In the beginning", i.e., a god who governs time, like the mythological "Cronus") was the one who begot God □□□.

As a whole, the translation of the Tora to Greek was considered by Jewish historiography as a dark event. Why? Because the Bible became a book that gentiles expected now to fully comprehend, even if they ignored the original language of the Tora, Hebrew, and its Jewish interpretation. The Septuagint was extensively used by the assimilationist Jews to advance their agenda and seek to syncretize Greek and Jewish values.

Three centuries later, the Septuagint also paved the way for the advancement of non-Jewish "Biblical" religions. As Timothy

McLay explains, *“the Jewish Scriptures as they were known, read and interpreted in the Greek language, provided the basis for much, if not most, of the interpretive context of the New Testament.”*

Unlike pagan cults, which were clearly antagonistic to the Tora, these new religions were supposedly based on the Jewish Scripture. The Bible was now reinterpreted at will and used to justify non-Jewish ideas or beliefs “in the name of the Bible”, all of which caused uncountable tragedies to the Jewish people for centuries or millenniums