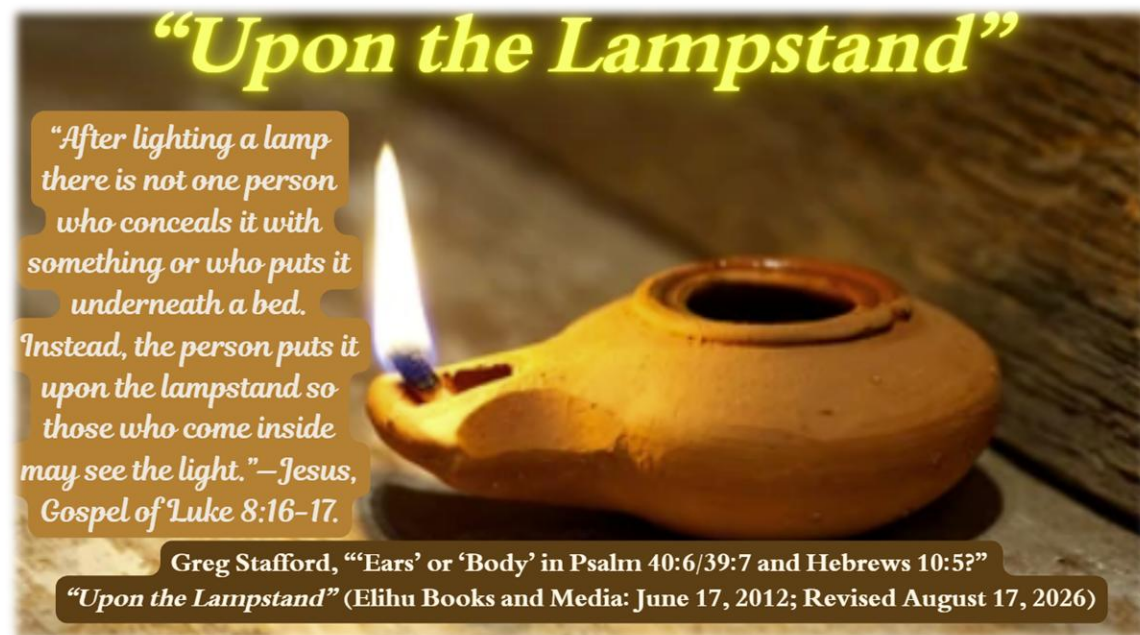




Question: Why does Hebrews 10:5 read “body” when the quoted Psalm (40:6/39:7) has “ears” according to the Hebrew Masoretic Text?

Answer: The author of the letter to the Hebrews may be quoting from an existing Greek translation of Psalm 40:6/39:7 which uses “body” (Greek: σῶμα, *soma*), not “ears” (Greek: ὠτία, *otia*). Or he may be translating from an existing Hebrew or Aramaic text which differs from the reading “ears” (Hebrew: אֲזַנַּיִם, *’aznayim*) in the 10th century CE Hebrew Masoretic Text (MT). It is also possible the author is rephrasing “ears” from Psalm 40:6/39:7 into a more suitable application for Jesus’ entire “body” (*soma*), which is clearly his focus in Hebrews 10:5-10. Before further discussing the context of Hebrews 10:5-10, we will review the best textual evidence for “ears” and for “body” in Psalm 40:6/39:7.

First, it is important to have a basic understanding of some of the sources for each reading, particularly those readings which may not be as familiar, namely, those from Origen’s “Hexapla.” This work contains a version of the Septuagint (LXX) available to Origen (who lived from around 185 to around 253 CE), as well as several other Greek translations of the Old Testament. Three of these non-LXX Greek translations are regularly referred to as the works of Theodotion, Aquila, and Symmachus and usually (but not always) they are dated to sometime in the early to late 2nd century CE. According to R. Timothy McLay:

The primary source of knowledge of the work of the versions by Theodotion, Aquila, and Symmachus is readings preserved from the Hexapla, which was composed by Origen (ca. 230-240 C.E.). Origen ([born] 185) travelled extensively in Rome, Palestine, and Alexandria, which afforded him unique opportunities to study the Scriptures, and in 234 he moved to Caesarea where he established a school and eventually began work on his monumental text known as the Hexapla. In six parallel columns Origen set out: (1) the Hebrews text as he knew it; (2) a Greek transliteration of the Hebrew; (3) Aquila; (4) Symmachus; (5) the LXX; (6) Theodotian. ... The exact nature and extent of the Hexapla remain something of a mystery, however, primarily because of the scarcity of our manuscript evidence. ... According to Eusebius’ account (*HE* 6.16.1-3), Origen discovered three other versions in addition to Theodotion, Aquila, and Symmachus. It is probable that these anonymous versions, referred to as Quinta, Sexta, and Septima, did not encompass the whole of the Hebrew Scriptures. The best attested of the three versions is Quinta, which G. Mercati has shown to be represented in the sixth column of the

Hexapla for the Psalter rather than Theodotion. For reasons such as this there are questions about the contents of the sixth column of the Hexapla, which naturally raise further questions about what the original Hexapla might have looked like and its purpose.¹

From the Hexapla, we will only consider the readings of Origen’s LXX, Theodotion, Aquila, and Symmachus. However, as noted by McLay, this means the reading attributed to “Theodotion” for Psalm 40:6/39:7 is really that of the anonymous “Quinta.”²

Text Support for “Ears” (ὠτία, otia)

Origen:

Mid-3rd century CE Psalm 40:6/39:7 Hexapla³ “ears” readings:

- Aquila (mid-2nd CE);⁴
- Symmachus (late 2nd CE);⁵
- Theodotion / Quinta (early 3rd century CE).⁶

¹ R. Timothy McLay, *The Use of the Septuagint in New Testament Research* (Grand Rapids, MI; Eerdmans, 2003), pages 124, 125, and 126.

² See note 6 on Theodotion and Quinta. For further discussion about the dating and identity of Theodotion, including Irenaeus’ reference to him and to Aquila (*Against Heresies* 3.21.1 [cited incorrectly by McLay as 3.24 on his page 127]), see McLay, *The Use of the Septuagint in New Testament Research*, pages 127-129.

³ See Fridericus Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1875), page 151.

⁴ For more on Aquila’s version, see Jenny R. Labendz, “Aquila’s Bible Translation in Late Antiquity: Jewish and Christian Perspectives,” *Harvard Theological Review* 102.3 (2009), pages 353-388. Labendz dates this version to the early or mid-2nd century CE (page 353).

⁵ For more on Symmachus’ version, see Arie van der Kooij, “Isaiah in the Greek Bible of Symmachus and Second Century Judaism in Palestine,” in *Transmission and Interpretation of the Book of Isaiah in the Context of Intra- and Interreligious Debates*, F. Wilk & P. Gemeinhardt, eds. (Bristol, CT: Peeters, 2016), pages 100-101. van der Kooij dates this version to the late 2nd century CE (page 99).

⁶ For more on Theodotion’s version see Colton Moore, “Theodotion Zechariah in the Fourth Gospel,” *NovTest* 63 (2021), pages 221–228, who presents what he calls “Theodotionic readings that pre-date” the historical figure of Theodotion whom Moore refers to as from the 2nd century CE (page 222). Moore believes quotations from Zechariah 9:9 in John 12:15 and Zechariah 12:10 in John 19:37 provide “grounds for a ‘proto-Theodotionic’ revision that pre-dates historical Theodotion, who possibly later revised this revision” (page 222). See also Arie van der Kooij, “The Septuagint, the Recension of Theodotion, and Beyond: Comments on the Quotation from Isaiah 42 in Matthew 12,” in *Textual History and the Reception of Scripture in Early Christianity*, Johannes De Vries, Martin Karrer, eds. (Septuagint and Cognate Studies 60; Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), pages 201-218, who believes readings from the book of Isaiah assigned to Theodotion “clearly represent the *kaige*-revision of this book... the only revision of the Old Greek of Isaiah we know of for the period of the first century CE” (page 204). van der Kooij dates Aquila to the “beginning second century” and Symmachus to “the end of [the second] century” (page 204). But since we appear to have Quinta for the Psalms, not Theodotion, the date is in the time of Antoninus or “Caracalla” (who ruled alone from 211 to 217 CE), as Eusebius (from around 263 to 339 CE) wrote, “In the Hexapla of the Psalms, after the four prominent translations, [Origen] adds not only a fifth, but also a sixth and seventh,” one of which Origen said he found “in a jar in Jericho in the time of Antoninus, the son of Severus” (*Church History* 6.16.3; NPNF 1, Second Series (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2004 [1890]), page 263; link: <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf201.iii.xi.xvi.html> [last accessed August 27, 2026]). Epiphanius (born about 315 / died 403 CE) also wrote about Quinta. See Chapter 7 (50d) and Chapters 18-19 (56c-57d) of *Epiphanius’ Treatise on Weights and Measures: The Syriac Version*, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization, No. 11, James Elmer Dead, ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1935), pages 22, 34-37, which is supported by two Syriac texts dated to the mid-6th (Or. Add. 17148) and 9th centuries (Or. Add. 14620).

<u>Latin Psalterium Gallicanum:</u>	Late 4 th century Latin translation of the Psalms by Jerome (born around 342 / died 420 CE) based on Origen’s Hexapla, with <i>aures</i> (“ears”) evidenced as early as the 6 th /7 th century Vatican Manuscript Reg. lat. 11 and other 7 th century Latin fragments.
<u>OL & Hebrew Latin Translations:</u>	Jerome’s late 4 th century Latin translations of Old Latin (OL) and Hebrew texts, and which use <i>aures</i> (“ears”) in Psalm 40:6, in 6 th -8 th century texts including Codex Amiatinus (8 th century).
<u>Syriac Peshitta:</u>	2 nd -5 th centuries CE Syriac translation of the Old Testament.
<u>Targum of the Psalms:</u>	4 th -6 th centuries CE Aramaic translation(s) of the Psalms. ⁷
<u>Syro-Hexapla:</u>	7 th century translation of Origen’s Greek LXX column into Syriac, which survives in the 8 th /9 th Ambrosian Codex.
<u>Greek Codex Sangermanensis:</u>	9 th /10 th century CE transcript of 6 th century CE Greek Codex Claromontanus.
<u>The Hebrew Masoretic Text (MT):</u>	10 th Century CE Hebrew text.

Psalm 40:6 is not preserved with the Dead Sea Scrolls or any in other early Aramaic or Hebrew text except for the Aramaic Targum of the Psalms and the Hebrew MT (both shown above). However, as shown on page 2, in the middle of the 3rd century CE Origen (born around 185 CE and lived to around 254 CE) completed a multi-column presentation of the Old Testament with several non-LXX Greek Old Testament translations. These include the works by Theodotion, Aquila, and Symmachus, all of which read “ears.”⁸

“Ears” is also supported by the 7th century translation of Origen’s LXX Psalms into Syriac, which is preserved in the late 8th to early 9th century Ambrosian Codex. Also, the 9th/10th century Greek Codex Sangermanensis, a transcript of the 6th century CE Greek and Latin Codex Claromontanus, reads, “ears.” This is also the reading (“ears”) found in the Latin Psalterium Gallicanum, a late 4th century CE revision of an earlier collection of Psalms by Jerome, for which we have texts dated from the 6th to 7th centuries.⁹

Concluding the support for “ears” in Psalm 40:6/39:7 is the Syriac Peshitta translation, compiled from the 2nd to 5th centuries CE, and the Aramaic translation or Targum of the Psalms. According to Ronald H. van der Bergh, the evidence from the Peshitta at Psalm 40:6 is “weakened by the fact that the reading [‘ears’] occurs in the margin,” which he believes was added later “on account of assimilation to the MT.”¹⁰ As for the Targum of

⁷ This is the date range given by David M. Stec, *The Targum of Psalms, The Aramaic Bible*, Vol. 16 (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2004), page 2, who calls even this “little more than guesswork,” as the Targum of the Psalms “contains material belonging to more than one period.”

⁸ See also Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum*, vol. 2, page 151.

⁹ Ronald H. van der Bergh, “A Textual Comparison of Hebrews 10:5b-7 and LXX Psalm 39:7-9,” *Neotestamentica* 42.2 (2008), page 355, adds minuscules 142 (11th century) and 156 (9th century) in support of “ears,” which he also says “has been placed as a remark in the margin” of minuscule 292 (11th century).

¹⁰ van der Bergh, “A Textual Comparison of Hebrews 10:5b-7 and LXX Psalm 39:7-9,” page 361.

the Psalms, David Stec notes it was not “widely known, or at least not widely used, until a relatively late date.”¹¹ Here is a fuller context of Stec’s assessment:

The only reference in the Talmud to an Aramaic translation of at least part of the Psalms is in *b. Meg.* 21b: ... Rashi seems not to have known of a Targum of the Psalms, and there is no clear and unambiguous reference to it in the works of Qimhi, Ibn Ezra, or Nahmanides. The first medieval work to quote extensively from TgPss [= the Targum of Psalms] is the *Arukh* of Rabbi Nathan ben Jehiel of Rome (1035-1110). Several of the midrashic and aggadic [= non-legal, rabbinic] additions of TgPss as compared with MT have parallels in *Midrash Tehillim* (*Midr. Teh.* [which dates to the 11th century CE]). This could mean that TgPss is later than *Midr. Teh.*, or it could suggest that the two works draw upon a common body of aggadic traditions. ... The date of the composition of TgPss remains very uncertain. A very tentative suggestion would be fourth to sixth century C.E., but this is little more than guesswork. It is possible and even likely that it contains material belonging to more than one period.¹²

Based on the preceding, the earliest date to which we might assign the reading “ears” is the early to middle 2nd century CE. While this is close to the time when Hebrews was written, there is also early and stronger support for the reading “body,” including the author of Hebrews’ own use of “body.” Given the fact there are no variant readings in Hebrews 10:5 supporting “ears,” here is a summary of the best evidence for “body” in Psalm 39:7/40:6, including the earliest text support for its quotation in the earliest text of Hebrews 10:5:

Support for “Body” (σῶμα, soma)

<u>P⁴⁶</u> :	2 nd /3 rd century CE Greek papyrus with “body in Hebrews 10:5 by a professional scribe from an even earlier, “excellent exemplar.” ¹³
<u>Origen</u> :	Mid-3 rd century CE “Hexapla” “body” reading: • Origen’s LXX version.
<u>PBodmer 24 (Rahlfs 2110)</u> :	Late 2 nd to early 4 th century CE Old Testament Greek papyrus with “body” in Psalm 40:6/39:7.
<u>Codex ̳ (Sinaiticus)</u> :	4 th century CE biblical manuscript with “body” in Psalm 39:7/40:6 and Hebrews 10:5.
<u>Codex B (Vaticanus)</u> :	4 th century CE biblical manuscript with “body” in Psalm 39:7/40:6 (does not include Hebrews 10:5).
<u>Vulgate</u> :	Late 4 th century Latin translation of Hebrews 10:5 by Jerome with <i>corpus</i> (“body”) in the mid-6 th century Codex Fuldensis and in the 8 th century Codex Amiatinus.
<u>Codex A (Alexandrinus)</u> :	5 th century CE biblical manuscript with “body” in Psalm 39:7/40:6 and Hebrews 10:5.

¹¹ David M. Stec, *The Targum of Psalms, The Aramaic Bible*, Vol. 16 (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2004), page 1.

¹² Stec, *The Targum of Psalms*, pages 1-2.

¹³ Philip W. Comfort and David P. Barrett, *The Text of the New Testament Greek Manuscripts: New and Complete Transcriptions with Photographs* (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale, 2001), page 207.

To the above support for “body” in Psalm 40:6/39:7, we can add Theodoret of Cyrus, who lived from the late 4th century to around the mid-5th century CE.¹⁴ We can also add Athanasius, who was born near the end of the 3rd century CE but who wrote during the 4th century, and who also used “body” in his quotation of Psalm 40:6/39:7.¹⁵ The earliest Christian writer to use “ears” in Psalm 40:6/39:7 is Irenaeus (born 130 and lived to about 150 to 202 CE), who in his *Against Heresies* (4.17.1) uses *aures* (“ears”) according to later Latin translations (10th / 11th centuries, including Codex Claromontanus).¹⁶

In view of the evidence for “body,” it is somewhat strange to find “ears” as the main text reading in the 1935, 1979, and 2006 editions of Rahlfs’ LXX.¹⁷ Similarly, the Greek for “ears” is also the main reading in Rahlfs’ 1931 and 1979 Göttingen editions of the LXX in 39:7.¹⁸ Put another way, the support for “ears” is “not weighty enough to justify ὠτία [*otia*] as original.”¹⁹ Karrer goes so far as to “propose to correct the Psalms text in the coming revision of the Septuaginta Göttingensis according to the main reading manuscripts (and Hebrews) and to explain the weaker ὠτία [*otia*] as a secondary adaptation to the Proto-MT.”²⁰

In Rahlfs’ presentation of the evidence for “ears” in his Göttingen editions’ note to Psalm 39:7, he first cites “La^G” (the 4th century CE Latin Psalterium Gallicanum) and “Ga” (the 9th/10th century CE Greek Codex Sangermanensis, a transcription of the 6th century CE Greek Codex Claromontanus). Rahlfs next cites MT, Theodotion, Aquila, and Symmachus in support of “ears,” and then ends the note with a reference to “body” in Hebrews 10:5. But Rahlfs’ note does not refer to the three LXX editions Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, and Alexandrinus, which support “body.” PBodmer 24 (also known as Rahlfs 2110) was not available when Rahlfs worked on the Göttingen editions, which should be remembered when using these editions, particularly at Psalm 39:7.

By contrast, in Rahlfs’ Stuttgart editions his note to Psalm 39:7 refers only to “Ga,” the 4th century CE Latin Psalterium Gallicanum, in support of the main text reading “ears.” Then his note cites the alternate reading “body” along with its support, not only from Hebrews 10:5, but now Rahlfs also cites the three LXX witnesses Vaticanus (“B”), Sinaiticus (“S”),

¹⁴ *Dialogues* 1, NPNF 3, page 169; link: http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf203/Page_169.html (last accessed August 27, 2026).

¹⁵ *Letters* VI, NPNF 4, page 522, link: http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf204/Page_522.html (last accessed August 27, 2026).

¹⁶ See “Against Heresies,” ANF 1, Second Series (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2004 [1892]), page 482; online here: https://ccel.org/ccel/irenaeus/against_heresies_iv/anf01.ix.vi.i.html (last accessed August 27, 2026).

¹⁷ A. Rahlfs, *Septuaginta* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft).

¹⁸ A. Rahlfs, *Septuaginta: Psalmi cum Odis* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht).

¹⁹ Martin Karrer, “The Epistle to the Hebrews and the Septuagint,” *Septuagint Research: Issues and Challenges in the Study of the Greek Jewish Scriptures*, Wolfgang Kraus and R. Glenn Wooden, eds. (Septuagint and Cognate Studies 53 Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), page 348.

²⁰ Karrer, “The Epistle to the Hebrews and the Septuagint,” page 349.

and Alexandrinus (“A”). While these witnesses are significant, it is the reading in Hebrews 10:5 which helps us establish with more confidence what is likely the correct reading. While not losing sight of the reading “body” in P⁴⁶, also significant is the fact this New Testament book (“Hebrews”) is written *to Hebrews*.

With a Jewish-Christian audience before him whom he knew likely already knew or could easily verify the accuracy of an Old Testament quotation, or a reasonable application of it. This seems particularly so if appeal was being made (as in Hebrews 10:5) to well-known, often-sung Psalms which are applied to current, controversial figures such as Jesus. As Karrer observes after studying Septuagint quotations in the letter to the Hebrews:

There is good evidence that our author appreciates written *Vorlagen* [texts] where he has them. Above all the quotations from his favorite books, Psalms, the Pentateuch, and Jeremiah are not only frequent, but also very extensive. Jer 38 (MT 31):31-34 in Heb 8:8-12 provides the longest quotation in the Christian literature of the first century on the whole. Heb 3:7-11 (LXX Ps 94:7-11) stands out in length when compared to citations of Psalms in other writings of early Christianity. So the conclusion is almost certain that the author possessed and used scrolls of the Psalms and Jeremiah.²¹

Given the author of Hebrews almost certainly “possessed and used scrolls of the Psalms,” the author of Hebrews likely had available to him a Greek text of Psalms which contained the reading “body,” or he translated a Hebrew or Aramaic text with the reading “body,” or he expanded on the reading “ears” by using “body” for a similar purpose, which we will discuss next. But based on the textual evidence of Origen’s mid-3rd century CE LXX version, the 4th century CE LXX texts of Sinaiticus (Ⲱ) and Vaticanus (B), the 5th century text of Alexandrinus (A), and Hebrews 10:5 in the 2nd / 3rd century CE text of P⁴⁶, “body” should probably be read over “ears” in translations of Psalm 40:6/39:7. Of course, when translating MT “ears” should still be used, but with a note indicating the variant readings.

But the question we began this discussion with is not simply whether the author of Hebrews quoted a text of Psalm 40:6/39:7 with “body,” nor is it only a question of whether he translated from an Aramaic or Hebrew text with “body.” More important is whether the author of Hebrews used “body” in 10:5 *regardless* of whether the quoted psalm read “ears.” If so, this would make “body” an “interpretive paraphrase of the Hebrew text,” which is likely if as Bruce goes on to write:

The Greek translator evidently regarded the Hebrew wording as an instance of *pars pro toto* [“a part for the whole”]; the “digging” or hollowing out of the ears is part of the total work of fashioning a human body. Accordingly he rendered it in terms which express *totum pro parte* [“the whole for a part”]. The body which was “prepared” for the speaker by God is given back to God as a “living sacrifice,” to be employed in obedient service to Him. But if our author had preferred the Hebrew wording [“ears”], it would have served his purpose almost as well, for in addition to reminding him and his readers of the psalm from which it was taken, it might have reminded them also of the Isaianic Servant’s language in the third Servant Song: “The Lord Jehovah ... wakeneth mine ear to hear as

²¹ Karrer, “The Epistle to the Hebrews and the Septuagint,” page 342 (underlining added).

they that are taught. The Lord Jehovah hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away backward” (Isa. 50:4f.).²²

Similarly, after noting evidence for both “ears” and “body” in Psalm 40:6/39:7 in patristic writings from the 2nd to the 5th centuries, Kraus quotes Ellingsworth who cites William Lane, who himself uses language that is nearly identical, in part, to Bruce:

The most likely explanation of the discrepancy is that, within the LXX tradition, [HΘEΛHCACΩTIA] was misread as [HΘEΛHCAC(C)ΩMA]... Alternatively, σῶμα [soma] may be a free translation or ‘interpretive paraphrase of the MT’ ..., based on the idea of the listening ear as *pars pro toto* [“a part for the whole”], the whole being the obedient person (cf. on this Isa. 40:4f).²³

Regardless of whether the quoted psalm read “ears” or “body,” the author of Hebrews either used a text with “body,” translated a text with “body,” or used “body” as an expanded reference to Jesus in fulfillment of Psalm 40:6/39:7. Karen Jobes believes all the variations in the quotation of Psalm 40:6/39:7, not just “body” for “ears,” are for the purpose of “paronomasia,” or repeating similar sounding vowels for rhetorical emphasis.²⁴ According to Jobes, “with each variation the author of Hebrews has achieved a phonetic assonance between the variant word and another element of the quotation,” which “marked prominence of certain elements of the paragraph, highlighting and emphasizing those particular thoughts.”²⁵ Specifically:

The lexical choice of σῶμα δὲ [soma de] concurrently with the substitution of the plural form of ὀλοκαυτώματα [“burnt offerings] achieves phonetic assonance and by this marked prominence the *one* body of Christ is contrasted with the *many* burnt offerings with which God was not pleased. The rhetorical construction of paronomasia therefore reinforces the point of the argument made in Hebrews 10.... The author’s use of rhetorical ornamentation in his quotation of Psalm 40 eloquently embellishes the argument in an aesthetically pleasing way (by first-century standards) and thereby provides psychological reinforcement for it.²⁶

We see the literal significance of “body” in Hebrews 10:5 not only from the rewording of the quotation of the psalm, but also from its application to the human Jesus in the same context leading up to what van der Bergh calls “the climax to the author’s comment on the

²² F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), pages 232-233.

²³ Wolfgang Kraus, “Ps 40(39):7-9 in the Hebrew Bible and in the Septuagint with Its Reception in the New Testament (Heb 10:5-10),” in *XVI Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies 71*, Gideon R. Kotzé, Wolfgang Kraus, and Michaël N. van der Meer, eds. (Stellenbosch, South Africa: 2016), page 125. For a discussion of other variations between the readings of Psalm 40:6/39:7 in Hebrews 10:5, see Kraus, “Ps 40(39):7-9 in the Hebrew Bible and in the Septuagint,” pages 127-131.

²⁴ Karen Jobes, “The Function of Paronomasia in Hebrews 10:5-7,” *Trinity Journal* 13NS (1992), pages 181-191.

²⁵ Jobes, “The Function of Paronomasia in Hebrews 10:5-7,” pages 184, 185.

²⁶ Jobes, “The Function of Paronomasia in Hebrews 10:5-7,” page 189.

quotation of LXX Ps 39:7-9,”²⁷ namely, Hebrews 10:10. In this verse which says Christians are “sanctified by the offering of the body [τοῦ σώματος, *tou somatos*] of Jesus Christ once for all.” It is the physical, fleshy body of Jesus that is in focus for the author of Hebrews, so much so he “skillfully adjusts his LXX text to support’ his own understanding.”²⁸

The two types of sacrifices portrayed in the singular in the quotation ([from verse 5] θυσίαν [“sacrifice”] and προσφοράν [“offering”] are also changed to the plural ([in verse 8] θυσίας [“sacrifices”] and προσφοράς [“offerings”]). 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. ... 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.²⁹

The “body” of Hebrews 10:5, 10 contrasts with the “burnt offerings” (*holokautomata*), the “sacrifices” (*thysia*), and the “offerings” (*prosphoras*) of Hebrews 10:6, 8. Those sacrifices only provided temporary benefit, unlike “the body of Jesus Christ.” For this reason, namely, that “the body of Jesus Christ” was offered to God, the author of Hebrews elsewhere speaks of, “in the days of his [= Jesus’] flesh” (5:7). The expression, “in the days” (= ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις, *en tais hemerais*), followed by an indeclinable (proper) noun or a genitive expression such as, “of his flesh” (τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ, *tes sarkos autou*), always refers to a specific period with a beginning and an ending. Setting aside Hebrews 5:7, consider the rest of the New Testament texts with this expression followed by an indeclinable noun or a genitive expression, as in Hebrews 5:7:

Matt. 23:30, “in the days [ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις, *en tais hemerais*] of our forefathers”;

Luke 1:5, “In the days [ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις, *en tais hemerais*] of Herod”;

Luke 4:25, “in the days [ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις, *en tais hemerais*] of Elijah”;

Luke 17:26, “in the days [ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις, *en tais hemerais*] of Noah”;

Luke 17:26, “in the days [ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις, *en tais hemerais*] of the Son of man”;

Luke 17:28, “in the days [ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις, *en tais hemerais*] of Lot”;

Acts 5:37, “in the days [ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις, *en tais hemerais*] of the registration”;

Revelation 2:13, “in the days [ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις, *en tais hemerais*] of Antipas”;

Revelation 10:7, “in the days [ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις, *en tais hemerais*] of the voice of the seventh angel.”

The same expression is also used frequently in the Greek Old Testament, with the same meaning, Consider these examples:

²⁷ van der Bergh, “A Textual Comparison of Hebrews 10:5b-7 and LXX Psalm 39:7-9,” page 371.

²⁸ van der Bergh, “A Textual Comparison of Hebrews 10:5b-7 and LXX Psalm 39:7-9,” page 370, quoting Ellingworth.

²⁹ van der Bergh, “A Textual Comparison of Hebrews 10:5b-7 and LXX Psalm 39:7-9,” pages 371, 372 (underlining added).

Genesis 10:25, “in the days [ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις] of him” (= Ebner’s days);

2 Samuel (2 Kings) 21:1, “in the days [ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις] of David”;

2 Kings (4 Kings) 24:1, “In the days [ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις] of him” (= Nebuchadnezzar’s days);

Psalm 44:1/43:2, “in the days [ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις] of them” (= their fathers’ days);

Isaiah 7:1, “in the days [ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις] of Ahaz”;

Jeremiah 1:2, “in the days [ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις] of Josiah”;

Judith 10:3, “in the days [ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις] of the life of her husband”;

Daniel 2:44, “in the days [ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις] of those kings.”³⁰

As with the New Testament examples, the above Old Testament Greek texts also use the same expression, “in the days,” with the article, followed by an indeclinable noun or a genitive expression, all referring to “days” or to a period which starts and ends. The only other New Testament example that is basically the same as the others, but without the article, is Matthew 2:1, “in [the] days [ἐν ἡμέραις, *en hemerais*] of Herod the king.” The wording is nearly the same as Luke 1:5, which uses the article before “days” but not before “king,” while Matthew 2:1 uses the article before “king” but not before “days.” With or without the article the expression, “in the days,” followed by a genitive or an indeclinable noun always points to a specific period with a beginning and an end as shown by all the above examples, including Hebrews 5:7.

In the case of Jesus, “the days of his flesh” (Hebrews 5:7) ended after he showed himself to his disciples and ascended to the Father (Luke 24:39; John 20:17; Acts 1:9). At that time, he “offered one sacrifice for sins perpetually and sat down at the right hand of God” (Hebrews 10:12). Similarly, Paul teaches in 2 Corinthians 5:16 that we “no more” (οὐκέτι, *ouketi*) know “Christ according to the flesh” (κατὰ σάρκα Χριστόν, *kata sarka Christon*). As Paul elsewhere also teaches, consistent with the apostle John (compare Revelation 1:12-16; 2:18 with Daniel 10:5-9, 16-18), Jesus was raised by the Father and “became a life-giving spirit” (1 Corinthians 15:45 [Ἐγένετο... πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν, *Egeneto... pneuma zoopoion*). He was raised in the “spiritual body” (ἐγείρεται σῶμα πνευματικόν, *egeiretai sōma pneumatikon*) of 1 Corinthians 15:44, which Paul directly contrasts with a physical body of flesh and blood (1 Corinthians 15:35-55). In this spiritual body, as a spirit, according to 1 Peter 3:18-19 Jesus preached to other “spirits in prison” (τοῖς ἐν φυλακῇ πνεύμασιν, *tois en phulakei pneumasin*), after which, on the third after the Father raised him in a spiritual body, Jesus raised his “body” of flesh from the tomb and appeared in it to his disciples before “offering” it to God, just as Hebrews 10:5-12 teaches.—Compare John 2:19-21; Galatians 1:1.

Even when Jesus appeared briefly as a man again before ‘offering his body,’ he openly taught in Luke 24:39 that a “spirit does not have flesh and bone” (πνεῦμα σάρκα καὶ ὀστέα οὐκ ἔχει, *pneuma sarka kai ostea ouk echei*). Therefore, as a “spirit” (1 Corinthians 15:45),

³⁰ This is the reading of the Theodotion text of Daniel 2:44, with the LXX reading in Rahlfs ἐν τοῖς χρόνοις τῶν βασιλέων τούτων, which has basically the same meaning but with *chronois* or “times” rather than *hemerais* “days,” and with *touton* (“these”) rather than *ekeinon* (“those”).

Jesus does not have “flesh” or “bone.” Further, 1 Corinthians 15:50 teaches “flesh and blood” (σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα, *sarx kai haima*) cannot “inherit the kingdom of God,” which is why Paul in Galatians 1:1 said he was “an apostle not from men [οὐκ ἀπ’ ἀνθρώπων, *ouk ap’ anthropon*], nor through a man [οὐδὲ δι’ ἀνθρώπου, *oude di’ anthropou*], but through Jesus Christ” (ἀλλὰ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, *alla dia Iesou Christou*). Paul says he “did not receive” the message about Jesus “from a man” (οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐγὼ παρὰ ἀνθρώπου παρέλαβον αὐτό, *oude gar ego para anthropou parelabon auto*). “Rather,” Paul confirms, he received “a revelation through Jesus Christ” (ἀλλὰ δι’ ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, *alla di’ apokalypseos Iesou Christou*), which is described in Acts 9:1-20, with Jesus speaking to Saul/Paul as a spirit in a bright light from heaven, not as “a man.”

References to Jesus as “a man” in texts such as 1 Timothy 2:5 do so only in a historical context, not as current descriptions of him post-resurrection in heaven! This is proven not only by the Pauline and other New Testament texts discussed with “the offering of the body of Jesus Christ” according to the author of Hebrews (10:5, 10), but also by the context of texts like 1 Timothy 2:5. There Jesus as “a man” is in direct reference to the time when “he gave himself as a ransom for all” as “a man” (1 Timothy 2:6). Jesus will always be that “man” who was born, who lived, and who died on earth, because he is the same person who experienced all those things. Similarly, he is the same person who existed “with God” in the beginning as the Son of God before John the Baptist was begotten or born, though John was begotten and born six months *before* Jesus (Luke 1:35-36; John 1:1, 29-34). That is how Jesus ‘saw Abraham rejoice’ at seeing his “day” (John 8:56-58), “in the days of his flesh” when he would “‘come in the scroll of the book it is written of him, ‘To do your will, God.’”—Hebrews 5:7; 10:7.