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Question 76 - What are the facts regarding the Hexapla?

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101 MOST ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BIBLE

76. **What are the facts regarding the Hexapla?**

Perhaps about 230 Origen embarked on the monumental task of creating a revised Septuagint by comparing it to other Greek and Hebrew versions of the Old Testament. The work took some 15 years to complete and is known as the Hexapla, meaning “sixfold,” because it consisted of six texts written in parallel columns. In the first column was the Hebrew text that was considered standard by Palestinian Jews of the day (and that Origen believed was the version of the Hebrew Bible that had been used by the Septuagint translators). The second column was a transliteration of the Hebrew words into Greek characters. Columns three and four were the Greek translations made by Aquila and Symmachus. In the fifth column was the Septuagint and in the sixth the Greek version translated by Theodotion.

By any measure, the completed Hexapla was a mammoth accomplishment, running to an estimated 6,500 pages in 15 large volumes. Not surprisingly, it was never copied in full, although the column containing the revised Septuagint and individual sections such as the Psalms were copied and circulated. Unfortunately the original codex of Origen’s work disappeared in the seventh century, one theory being that it was destroyed during the Muslim conquest of Palestine.

(The Bible Through the Ages. Reader’s Digest. Pleasantville, N.Y. 1996. pp. 208, 209)