

Was the New Covenant Originally Greek?

In an effort to deny the importance of YHWH's great Name, there are those who mistakenly contend that the New Covenant was originally written in Greek. They assume that because the sources from which our New Covenant is translated are Greek, that the names YHWH and Yahsha as revealed in the Hebrew are missing in the New Covenant and therefore unnecessary. Is this true? Here are some facts revealing why the Hebrew manuscripts of the New Covenant are not extant, though clearly evident, and why worship today has strayed from the "faith once delivered."

THOSE WHO MAINTAIN that the original New Covenant text was Greek believe they have the right to call YHWH by the titles "Lord" (from Old English meaning *keeper of the loaf*) or the noun "God" (Old English, from Anglo-Saxon/German), or perhaps call Him "Eternal," as does James Moffatt in his translation.

Yet, the Name YHWH is the only Name YHWH Himself has given us by which He wishes to be remembered:

"And YHWH said moreover unto Moses, Thus shall you say unto the children of Israel, YHWH, The Almighty One of your Abbas, the The Almighty One of Abraham, the The Almighty One of Isaac, and the The Almighty One of Jacob, has sent me unto you: this [is] my name for ever, and this [is] my memorial unto all generations." Exodus 3:15.

Interestingly, Moffatt apologizes for substituting "The Eternal" for YHWH's Name in his translation. Note his candor:

"Strictly speaking, this ought to be rendered 'YHWH,' which is familiar to modern readers in the erroneous form of 'Jehovah.' Were this version intended for students of the original, there would be no hesitation whatever in printing 'YHWH.' But almost at the last moment I have decided with some reluctance to follow the practice of the French scholars and of Matthew Arnold (though not exactly for his reasons), who translate this name by 'the Eternal,' except in an enigmatic title like 'the Lord of hosts.' There is a distinct loss in this, I fully admit, to drop the racial, archaic term is to miss something of what it meant for the Hebrew nation..."

Moffatt implies that those who insist on substituting the Name YHWH with "the Eternal" are not really interested in being deep students of the Bible, but are content to accept human substitute titles instead of calling on the very Name YHWH has Himself selected as His memorial Name to be remembered by all generations. Moffatt agrees that students of the true or original texts know and call Him by His correct Name YHWH. Those referring to YHWH as the "Eternal" grudgingly concede that the titles "God" or "the Lord" are incorrect. Humble reverence directs His people to call Him by the Name He chose for Himself...**YHWH!**

The all-powerful Creator tells His creation what we must call Him. We cannot decide what is appropriate to call Him. We as His creation can no more name our Creator than children can name their parents! YHWH's Name is the same the world over. He revealed it to those who understood and spoke Hebrew. Names are transliterated into other languages. That is, the sound is brought over into another language, using its alphabet to produce the same sound.

Devout Hebrews Writing Greek?

Every book written in the New Covenant was written by Israelites whose native language was Hebrew (with the possible exception of Luke). This raises the question, were any of the 27 New Covenant books first penned in Greek? Some critics declare that in spite of the preponderance of Israelite authors, the entirety of the New Covenant was written in the Greek language.

A number of competent scholars, however, contend that the New Covenant was first written in Hebrew (or Aramaic, a sister language), basing their assertion on valid grounds.

"The writers were Hebrews; and thus, while the language is Greek, the thoughts and idioms are Hebrew...If the Greek of the New Covenant be regarded as an inspired translation from Hebrew or Aramaic originals, most of the various readings would be accounted for and understood," Dr. E. W. Bullinger, **Companion Bible** (app.94).

“...we must not forget that Christianity grew out of Judaism...The Pauline epistles were letters written by Paul to small [Messianic] congregations in Asia Minor, Greece, and Rome. These early [believers] were mostly Jews of the dispersion, men and women of Hebrew origin...The Epistles were translated into Greek for the use of converts who spoke Greek.” **Holy Bible from the Peshitta**, George Lamsa, p.xi.

We read that Peter (Kepha) and John (Yahchanan) were untaught, unschooled, illiterate, ordinary men. “*Now when they saw the boldness of Peter (Kepha) and John (Yahchanan), and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with [Yahsha], Acts 4:13.*

Impetuous Peter (Kepha) was, along with James and John (Yahchanan), a fisherman. Peter (Kepha) and the others who became fishers of men hardly would be expected to write their epistles in a second language, but would logically write in Hebrew, their native tongue. Greek might be more prevalent in cosmopolitan trading and business centers such as Caesaria than in Galilee, but it was neither the language of the Apostles nor of the Temple.

Greek is a very precise language, while Hebrew is picturesque and poetic, using similies, metaphors, and allegories (The Hebrew Bible contains only 8,198 different words-by contrast the English language includes more than 550,000 words.) Renowned Jewish historian Flavius Josephus wrote that although he far exceeded those of his own nation in Jewish learning, he could not pronounce Greek with sufficient exactness, and that “our nation does not encourage those that learn the languages of many nations...” Furthermore Josephus reveals, “The Greeks called old nations by names of their own, Antiq. I,v, and put the Hebrew names into their own form, c.vi.” This explains why some Hebrew names end up in English texts in a Grecianized form.

Because the Greek language adds suffixes in its declension of nouns, such as ending with s in the nominative, masculine singular, vestiges of Greek influence appear in our King James Bible not only in the Latinized name of the Savior “Jesus,” but many other Hebrew names ending in the Greek s, such as: Judah = Judas, Isaiah = Esaias, Eliyah = Eliseus, Uriah = Urias, Hezekiah = Ezekias, Jechoniah = Jechonias.

Importance of the Greek Language

Greek is a very exact language, a prime reason that YHWH has preserved both the Old and New Covenants in the Greek. His wisdom has gone unrecognized by most Bible teachers. Let us examine the history of Greek influence upon our civilization.

The importance and influence of the Greek language and culture has its roots with Alexander the son of Philip of Macedonia. *Time-Life's* book **Empires Ascendant** on page 31 states: “*Few men changed the world so profoundly. In his brief reign- scarcely 13 years- Alexander conquered more territory than any other warrior before or since. In his epic march across Asia, he pulled a vast tide of humanity in his wake, not only soldiers but a massive influx of traders, administrators, and ordinary settlers. He vastly broadened the ancient world's horizons, mixing races and cultures, carrying civilization into a new more cosmopolitan age.*”

After Alexander's death at Babylon, his kingdom was divided among four generals. This is alluded to in Daniel 8:5-7, 21-22. Verse 8 refers to Alexander's untimely death as the he-goat's horn, which is broken, and his kingdom divided into four. Greek culture and influence (known as Hellenism) continued among these sprawling kingdoms. To emphasize this concept, we quote the following:

“*Most cities welcomed Hellenism, however, because of it, educated men throughout the ancient world, spoke one language-a common Greek known as Koine. Business was conducted in Koine, laws were passed in it, and books written in it, including all the New Covenant and much of the Old Covenant...The mystery religions of Thrace and Asia Minor had long been popular among Greeks. Now the Persian god Mithra, with his firm insistence on unswerving duty, gained favor among army officials. His cult which employed secret rites of baptism and rebirth long before Christianity began, would eventually be carried through the Roman soldiers. Another pervasive faith was the Egyptian belief in Isis and Horus, holy mother and tender babe, and in the Abba Osiris, resurrected from the dead. It, too, was to spread throughout the Mediterranean world. The Hellenistic kingdoms survived for well over a century, tied together by common bonds of language, culture, and trade,*” Ibid.

At the time of the Messiah, Koine Greek language was the international language. The Hebrew Old Covenant had already been translated into Greek, known as the “Septuagint,” from the Latin *Septuaginta* meaning “70” and often represented by the Roman numerals LXX. It is said that 72 Jewish translators sent from Jerusalem produced the version for Ptolemy II for his library in Alexandria, Egypt, in the third century BCE.

John (Yahchanan) 19:19-20 reveals that Hebrew, Latin, and Greek were the languages spoken in Palestine at the time the Savior was impaled. Not all understood Greek, Latin, or Hebrew. When the Messiah was teaching His disciples on this earth, the Koine Greek continued as the international language, but was relatively unknown or not understood in the rural towns nor by the Apostles, according to French archaeologist Ernest Renan.

Impact of Growing Anti-Semitism

Anti-Semitism played a big part in the Gentile Believers' rejecting the study of Hebrew and rejecting the Old Covenant. Men want to accept the Hebrew Savior, but reject His message and the Old Covenant verification of His Messiahship. This is true even today.

In His wisdom, YHWH had prepared the world to receive the Old Covenant in the Greek language. Daniel 8:8 (already alluded to) is recognized as a clear reference to Alexander and his conquest of the Middle East, promoting Greek culture and customs throughout his domain. The Old Covenant was translated into Greek, now the New Covenant would survive in its Greek translation.

The number of Gentile converts soon surpassed those converted from Judaism. This is evident by the seven deacons of Acts 6:5, considered to be of Hellenistic persuasion.

The Old Covenant Septuagint Greek was used by early Catholic scholars because of their disdain for the Jews and their ignorance of the Hebrew language, according to Adam Clarke. At first the Jews lauded the LXX (Septuagint) as a masterful accomplishment, but when it was later appropriated by the Gentiles who spurned the Hebrew Old Covenant texts, the Jews rejected the LXX as not being a faithful rendition.

McClintock and Strong's Cyclopaedia shows that the Jews lamented the perversion of the Septuagint by Catholic scholars:

"But now the Jews saw to their grief that their Scriptures [LXX] were made the instruments for teaching the principles of a religion [Catholicity] which they regarded as nothing less than an apostasy from Moses," p. 988, "Greek Versions."

'Jewish Christians' Keep the Truth

Interesting comments are given from the perspective of an Islamic author, critically observing three groups that had evolved from the Israelite religion. Author Shlomo Pines classifies them as Jews, Christians and what he terms "Jewish Christians." The "Catholics" are viewed as gentiles who, because of their pagan background, rejected truth found in the Old Covenant and abandoned the religion Yahsha lived and taught. The "Jewish-Christians" continued obeying the Old Covenant. Pines' appraisal is very revealing:

"The Jewish Christians...are not vegetarians and they do not reject certain portions of the Old Covenant...they are, as far as the observance of commandments is concerned, orthodox Jews...They thus carried on the old tradition of the first Christian community of Jerusalem," p. 39, from **The Jewish Christians of the Early Centuries of Christianity According to a New Source**.

"The break between "Gentile Catholicism" and "Jewish Christianity" came when the "al-Rum" [Roman or Byzantine Christians] complained to the Roman governors about the Jews. They were told by the Roman rulers that if they would separate themselves, praying as the Romans do (while facing east), eating things Romans eat, regarding as permissible such as Romans do, then the Romans would extend special favor to the Gentile Christian body, according to Pines.

When the Gentile Catholics reported this offer to their fellow companions [Hebrew Christians], they were rebuffed. The Romans should have no part in determining the religion of the Messiah, contended the Hebrew Christians. They refused to surrender their New Covenants, but gathered them and fled. The Gentile Catholics reported this to the Romans, who accordingly made a search for them, capturing some who were burned or killed, page 15.

'Gentile Catholics' Drift from the Faith

Author Pines discusses how the Gentile Catholics took counsel to replace the New Covenant Evangel, seeing that the true and original was lost to them. They constructed their own. A great part of what was contained in the original was missing in their version. Acquaintances among the Gentile Christians were those who remembered much of the true Evangel, but because they were attempting to

establish a following, the Gentile Catholics refrained from communicating with them. Quoting from author Pines concerning the Gentile Christians:

“Then there is not among these a Gospel written in the language of [Messiah], which was spoken by Him and His companions, namely the Hebrew language, which is that of Abraham, the Friend of [YHWH] and of the other prophets, the language which was spoken by them and in which the Books of [YHWH] were revealed to them and to the other Children of Israel, and which [YHWH] addressed them. They have abandoned this language.

“Thus there is no Christian among them who in observing a religious obligation recites these Gospels in the Hebrew language: he does not do so out of ruse using a stratagem, in order to avoid public shame,” pp. 16-17.

Pines goes on to show the reason they declined to use the Hebrew language was that “the people of the Book” who spoke Hebrew quickly recognized the error and deception of the Gentiles Catholic’s gospel, such as quotations from counterfeit authorities. Thus, they employed a language other than Hebrew so the men of knowledge would not grasp their teaching.

Pines notes the Gentile Catholics, *“Accordingly, they gave up Hebrew and took up numerous other languages which had not been spoken by [Messiah] and His companions,”* page 17, *ibid.*

Language Used to Bypass Truth

“...Jewish Christian authors...also deplored the fact that the Christians...no longer read the Gospels in Hebrew, the language of [Yahsha], and all the prophets. Quite clearly, these Jewish Christians believed that they preserved and continued (perhaps clandestinely) the traditions of the first not yet corrupted Christian community of Jerusalem founded by the immediate disciples of [Yahsha] who professed His religion, i.e....observed the Mosaic Commandments,” page 65.

Pines goes on to recount how those denouncing the Hebrew Evangel were triumphant in their use of foreign languages to convert many nations. This gave them the opportunity to bypass the Hebrew Scriptures who were numerous among the Jews. Thus, the Hebrew language and the Old Covenant were set aside and Israelite laws ignored as more and more pagans took up New Covenant “Christianity.”

When Catholicism became the state religion of Rome, the position of the Hebrew Christians worsened. They were the minority, and their beliefs became the heresy of the Romanized Christian world. The Hebrew Christians found it easier to gather with the Jews at the synagogue (as did Paul), for both groups observed the Old Covenant laws. However, paganism was baptized by the church and had become the state religion.

If we can rely upon Pines’ work, it is quite understandable that when Titus and his Roman legions destroyed Jerusalem in the year 70 C.E., and Hadrian put down the revolt of Bar Kochba in 135 C.E., that the Jews became fair game because of their insurrection. Along with the Jews, however, were the converts to the Messiah who continued to worship in the synagogue and Temple rather than take up the pagan celebrations of Gentile Catholicism.

“The land was desecrated and stripped; Jews were tortured, murdered, and sold as slaves on the open market; and the site of the Temple was plowed under. From this time on Jerusalem increasingly became a Gentile city,” p. 509, the **Bible Almanac**.

Romans Destroy Hebrew Manuscripts

Angry, Hadrian was determined to destroy Jerusalem, vowing there would never be a city there. The Hebrew Scriptures had been misinterpreted by the Jews, assuming Ezekiel was referring to Rome as the enemy that would be overcome. Hebrew Scriptures were blamed for the Jewish insurrection. The Romans took vengeance upon the Jews, not recognizing converts to the Messiah. Unaware of a Hebrew New Covenant, the Romans destroyed all Hebrew texts, including Hebrew scrolls of the Hebrew-Christian New Covenant as well. Rome did not differentiate between Old and New Covenant Hebrew writings nor between Jews and Hebrew Christians.

Later came a division between the religion of the Jews and the New Covenant believers in the Messiah. Not only were the Romans responsible for eradicating many Hebrew New Covenants, but the Jews themselves took part in such activity.

Pines makes a point that the Jews and certain “Jewish Christians” worshiped together; *“After Him [Yahsha] His disciples were with the Jews and the Children of Israel in the latter’s synagogues and observed the prayers and the feasts of (the Jews) in the same place as the latter. However, there was a disagreement between them and the Jews with regard to [Messiah.]”*

Pines goes on to quote the *Toldot Yeshu*, detailing the great war and slaughter, cases of confusion, killings, and loss of money. *“Everyone was killing his relatives without pity. And yet they did not abandon the Torah of Israel. And the Jews could not enter the Temple because of the reprobates.”*

Eventually, there came a parting of the ways between the Jews and those who believed in the Messiah and kept the Commandments. These True Believers were persecuted by both the Jews and the pagan Christians down through history. Little is heard of them as the Romanized Catholicism gained the ascendancy and ruled in consort with the emperors of Europe.

Perhaps the recent discovery and publishing of the contents of the Dead Sea Scrolls will help shed more light on this era of history. The lack of any Hebrew New Covenant continued.

Truth and Manuscripts Under Attack

Later came the Crusades, which were religious wars from the close of the 11th to the end of the 13th century. It was Christian Europe against the Mohammedans for the conquest of the “Holy Land”. Conquered by Arabs in the 7th century, Palestine soon fell to Seljuk Turks in 1078, with their cruel ways and heavy taxes upon Christians living in Palestine.

The first of the seven Crusades began with the cry “Deus Vult,” (G-d Wills It!). Made up of a rabble from France, England, Flanders, and Lorraine, every member wore a cross. They ravaged the countryside, especially afflicting the Jews whom they murdered, then confiscated their property, burning their possessions and looting the country. These “Crusaders” did not differentiate between Jews and Hebrew Christians (those Messianic converts who continued obeying Israelite laws). Those rejecting the cross were considered Jews and fair game. The victims were either burned or strangled- so there would be no shedding of blood!

The Middle Ages witnessed the Inquisitions, which were against heretics and all persons guilty of any offense against Roman Catholic orthodoxy. From Valentinian I and Theodosius onward heretics were subject to exile or confiscation, disqualified from inheriting property and under condemnation of death.

The condemnations of books were carried out from the burning of the Arian writings by Constantine to the burning of the Talmud by Justinian. The Inquisitors could not take proceedings against Jews as such. The Jews might profess their religion and observe its rites without being in a state of heresy; they were only heretic when they attacked Christian faith or community, made proselytes, or returned to Judaism after being converted.

After the expulsion of Jews from Spain under Queen Isabella, the attacks centered on Catholic converts descended from infidels (Jews). Note the following account:

“As late as 1715 a secret association was discovered at Madrid, consisting of 20 families, having a rabbi and a synagogue. A great number of people were denounced, sent to the gallows, or burnt, for having returned to their ancestral religion, on the flimsiest of evidence, such as making ablutions during the day time, abstaining from swine’s flesh or wine, using henna, singing Moorish songs, or possessing Arabic manuscripts.”

Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th Ed. P. 596, “Inquisition.”

Possessing “Arabic manuscripts” soon included the Hebrew scrolls, whether Old Covenant or New Covenant sections of the Bible. Resentment and arrogance play a big part even today among those who reject anything “Jewish.”

The young Greek conqueror tried his utmost to respect local customs, to revere local deities, to administer captured lands through existing hierarchies, and to win the populace to his side, page 26.

“Most cities, welcomed Hellenism, however. Because of it, educated men throughout the ancient world spoke one language-a common Greek known as Koine. Business was conducted in Koine; laws were passed in it, and books written in it, including all the New Covenant and much of the Old Covenant. Greek architects, sculptors, artisans and goldsmiths left their imprint from the Apennines to Himalayas. Greek-style jewelry was worn in Siberia, and on the Indian subcontinent some statues of the Buddha wore Greek clothing and posed with and elegant Aegean grace... The Hellenistic kingdoms survived

for well over a century, tied together by common bonds of language, culture, and trade.”

Page 36.

Seminaries continue to teach Koine Greek and Hebrew. The Hebrew of the Bible is Sephardic or Temple Hebrew, while the language spoken today in Israel is Ashkenazi Hebrew, a Germanic dialect. In His wisdom YHWH allowed the Old Covenant to be translated into Greek. To help the New Covenant more easily cut across language and cultural barriers, it was the Greek copies that survived. There is no known “original” Greek New Covenant existing, nor is there an original Greek Septuagint of the Old Covenant.

English today is the world language. America probably actively promotes the Bible around the world more than all other countries combined. It behooves us to do all we can to promote YHWH’s Name and His truth in every way we can.

Although there is no original Hebrew New Covenant available today, history shows there was indeed an original, which contained the Name of YHWH and His Son Yahsha. And we can now understand better how we have a Greek New Covenant and why the sacred Name was changed in the Greek and then in the English.

YHWH says that “Yah’-weh” is His Name for eternity and is not to be changed. “This is my Name forever, and this is My memorial unto all generations,” Exodus 3:15. Not even a language can change that.

Textual analysis and scholarship supporting an original Hebrew New Covenant

The Remnant of YHWH accepts both the Old and New Covenants of the Bible, and generally follow the King James translation because many reference works are based upon that version. We do not accept, however, the substituted names and common titles of our heavenly Abba and His Son. We also object to the Hellenized names give to the Hebrew worthies in the New Covenant, such Hezekiah appearing as "Ezekias" (Mat. 1:9), and Judah (Yahudah) as "Judas" (Mat. 1:2).

Beyond just names, churchianity itself is tainted with Greek thinking, Hellenized creeds, and unscriptural practices derived from Greco-Roman infusions through a Greek-translated New Covenant. Scholarship is increasingly validating the case for a Hebrew original New Covenant. We include some of their documentation in this short study.

Examining all the evidence, we conclude that the New Covenant was inspired in Hebrew (or Aramaic) and then later translated into Greek. The testimony to this is voluminous and logical. One needs only to consider that the writers were themselves Hebrews, and "while the language is Greek, the thoughts and idioms are Hebrew" (Companion Bible, appendix 94).

Beginning on page 7 is a list of scholars and their treatises supporting an original Hebrew New Covenant. This list is by no means comprehensive. Other enlightened experts have come to the same realization that the New Covenant was originally a collection of Hebrew works. The Bible's Hebrew writers were led by the YHWH’s Spirit to write in their native Hebrew language, just as Shaul (Shaul) was spoken to in the Hebrew tongue, Acts 26:14.

New Covenant Founded on “Old Covenant”

The inquiring Bible student soon realizes that the New Covenant is undeniably Hebrew in grammar, idiom, and thinking. This opens up a whole new understanding of the essence of truth for the new Covenant believer. If the New Covenant is rooted in the Hebrew Language, then its teachings also derive from the Hebrew culture and are embedded in the Hebrew - and not pagan Greek - view of truth.

Those who would object to this reality must be asked the question, does arguing for a Greek New Covenant bring one closer to the truth, or take one further from it, knowing that the Old Covenant is a thoroughly Hebrew work? Is the New Covenant a complete replacement of Old Covenant teachings, with entirely new truth flavored with Hellenistic thought, practice, and understanding?

Not according to the Apostle Shaul. He wrote that the New Covenant is built on the foundation of the Old Covenant prophets as well as the apostles, Ephesians 2:20. Yahsha the Messiah gave the directive

to "search the Scriptures," John 5:39. The only "scriptures" extant at that time were those of the Old Covenant. The New Covenant writings were not yet finished and compiled.

In His parable of Lazarus, Yahsha again advised the unknowing to listen to "Moses and the prophets," meaning the Old Covenant, Luke 16:29. It was these same Old Covenant Scriptures that the "noble Bereans" used to establish truth in Acts 17:11, and the very ones Shaul told Timothy would make one perfect, 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

Aside from approaching truth from the right scriptural foundation, there is another important reason for coming to grips with the original language of the New Covenant. One of the arguments advanced against the verity of the sacred Names is that the Names would appear as "God" (Theos) and "Jesus" in the New Covenant Greek text. The logic goes, if such titles and names are in the "original" text, then who are we to change them to something else?

Apart from this argument's erroneous premise ("God" is not the same word as the Greek Theos: "Jesus" is only partly a Greek term), we must ask, is it legitimate to change someone's name simply because you are writing about him in some other language? Names are transliterated, not translated. If a book about the president of the United States were written in or translated into Russian, would the author or translators look for a Russian equivalent name for "Bill Clinton"? Of course not. His name would still appear as Bill Clinton.

By the same token, the Abba's and Son's Names are the same in every language. Therefore we must call on them by their names revealed through the Hebrew tongue. There is no more a Russian equivalent name for "Bill Clinton" than there is a Greek or English equivalent of the Hebrew "Yahweh" and "Yahsha.". "God", "Lord", and "Jesus" are not equivalents, they are *replacements – frauds!*

Hebrew Words Out of Place?

A peculiar discrepancy within the New Covenant is this: if the New Covenant were originally composed in Greek, why does it contain many untranslated Hebrew words? Why did the writers go to all the trouble of preserving Hebrew terms in their Greek writings?

The only valid explanation is that the Greek language had no equivalent words for these uniquely Hebrew terms taken from an original Hebrew text and translated into Greek. These Hebrew survivals attest to a Hebrew original - and a Greek (and English) translation that brought them across unchanged from the Hebrew.

The following HEBREW words are included in the King James New Covenant, as taken from the Greek translation (some are Aramaic).

Abba ("dearest Abba"); **Messiah** ("Anointed one"); **Rabbi** ("my teacher"); **hosanna** ("Save! We beseech"); **Amen** (suggests trust, faithfulness); **talitha cumi** ("maid arise"); **ephphatha** ("be opened"); **corban** ("a dedicated gift"); **Sabbath** ("repose", "desist" from exertion); **Satan** ("adversary"); **mammon** ("riches"); **raca** ("to spit in one's face"); **cummin** (herb); **Maranatha** ("Master, I pray you overthrow"); **Passover** ("pass over"); **Emmanuel** (title meaning "El with us"); **Eli lama Sabachthani** ("my El, why have you forsaken me?")

Even more compelling evidence for a New Covenant originally composed in Hebrew is found in the clear Hebrew word order extant in the New Covenant. Many sentences contain the verb-noun reversal common to Hebrew and Semitic languages. Scholars also have long recognized that the grammar of the New Covenant does not befit good Greek, but does reflect excellent Hebrew grammar.

In addition, many Hebraic idioms and expressions are scattered throughout the New Covenant. Had the original been composed in Greek, these sayings would have been put into Greek form and expression. For example, what did Yahsha and others mean by statements that don't make good sense in Greek (Or English) but are powerful in the Hebrew? Such expressions include: "If your eye is evil" (Matt. 6:23); "let the dead bury the dead" (Matt. 8:22); "for if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry" (Luke 23:31), and "thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head" (Shaul in Rom. 12:20).

Numerous examples of Semitic poetry and reverse couplets (chiasmus) are dead giveaways to the original Hebrew of these books. Hebrew is also distinct for its colorful descriptions of simple, common acts. For example, a beautiful expression in classical Hebrew is found in Luke 16:23: "...he lift up his eyes...and saw..." Other sayings peculiar to Hebrew and found in the Evangelists include: "Lay these sayings in your years," "Cast out your name as evil," "He set his face to go," and "The appearance of his countenance was altered."

Whole sentences or paragraphs in the New Covenant can be retranslated word for word back into the Hebrew. Luke 10:5-6 is just one example: "And into whatsoever house you enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again." This passage is a synthesis of vivid Hebrew idioms unknown in the Greek.

Greek Unpopular in Palestine

Many linguists and historians now attest that the Evangelists, the Acts, and the Book of Revelation were composed in Hebrew (see listing of these scholars included herein). Early "church fathers" validate that the Book of Matthew was originally written in Hebrew (see Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* 3:39; Irenaeus' *Against Heresies* 3:1; Epiphanius' *Panarion* 20:9:4; Jerome's *Lives of Illustrious Men* 3 and *De Vir.* 3:36).

Hebrew was the language of Judah and Galilee in the first century. Its sister language, Aramaic, remained the secondary tongue and the language of commerce. Jews in this area were not Greek-speaking. Their revulsion to the Greeks and the Greek language derives from the fact that the Maccabees had just defeated the Greeks and driven them and their pagan defilement from the Temple and Palestine.

The eminent first century Jewish historian, priest, and scholar Josephus admitted that he could not speak Greek fluently and that the Jews frowned on any Jew who did.

"I have also taken a great deal of pains to obtain the learning of the Greeks, and understanding the elements of the Greek language although I have so long accustomed myself to speak our own language, that I cannot pronounce Greek with sufficient exactness: for our nation does not encourage those that learn the languages of many nations" (*Antiquities*, 20:11:2).

If this illustrious scholar was unable to speak Greek sufficiently, how could the uneducated disciples write their books in Greek? From what we've learned, why would they even want to do so?

A Hebrew Writing to Hebrews

The common perception is that Shaul was a Hellenist Jew from Tarsus who wrote his letters to Greek-speaking assemblies in Asia minor, Rome and Greece.

Shaul was first and foremost a Pharisee - a Jewish sect opposed to Hellenization. He was of the tribe of Benjamin and a "Hebrew of Hebrews," *Philippians* 3:5. A note in the NIV Study Bible says the expression "Hebrew of Hebrews" means "in language, attitudes and life-style."

Shaul was educated at the feet of Gamaliel, a great doctor of Hebrew law, *Acts* 22:3. Although he was born in Tarsus (a city speaking mainly Aramaic), Shaul grew up in Jerusalem, the center of Pharisaic Judaism, *Acts* 22:3.

The epistles Shaul wrote were to various assemblies of the Dispersion. Each assembly was composed of a nucleus group of Jews and supplementary collections of gentiles (read about the Thessalonian Assembly, *Acts* 17:1-4, as well as the Corinthians, *1 Cor.* 10:1-2). The converted Jews in these assemblies would receive Shaul's letters and then teach the gentiles among them. It wasn't the gentiles who were converting Jews to a Grecian-Roman faith with a Greek Savior and doctrines of mystery worship!

Typically Shaul went first to the synagogue when he traveled to contact these and other assemblies (*Acts* 13:14; 14:1; 17:1; 17:10, 18:4, 19:8). The language of the second Temple and synagogues at this time was Hebrew and Aramaic, not Greek.

His letters in Hebrew to these Jews (and gentiles) of the various assemblies would reflect his mission to take the message of the Kingdom of YHWH to "the Jew first and then to the Greek," *Romans* 1:16.

As an example, Shaul specifically addressed Jews of the Corinthian assembly: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that you should be ignorant, how that all our Abbas were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (*1 Cor.* 10:1-2).

Truth from Greek or Hebrew?

Understanding basic truth is to know that Yahweh chose the Hebrew peoples with whom to make a Covenant and through whom to bring the truth.

How much of a gentile should the True Worshiper be who is bathing in Scriptures first delivered to Hebrew patriarchs, Hebrew prophets, Hebrew apostles and lived by a Savior from the human lineage of King David? Shaul was no champion of the gentile cause. He was the champion of a Hebrew Messiah and scriptures given in a Hebrew Old Covenant. These were what he taught in his epistles. Note:

"But this I confess unto you, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the Mighty One of my ancestors, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets" (Acts 24:14). "Law and prophets" refers to the Torah-based writings of "Old Testament" Scriptures.

Which culture, world-view, and mentality should prevail among True Worshipers today? A Greek-gentile heritage? Or the birthright of those grafted into the promised of Israel established by the Heavenly Abba Yahweh Himself?

Shaul wrote to the assembly at Rome, "Who are Israelites; to whom pertains the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of YHWH, and the promises" -Rom 9:4. If Christianity were honest with itself, it would openly acknowledge that it derives its faith from Hebrew and not Greco-Roman Scriptures. That its salvation comes from a Savior who came as a Hebrew not to establish a new religion but to build on what went before. Yahsha and the Scriptures are Hebrew.

This one pivotal truth is being taught today, and real understanding of the Scriptures is breaking out everywhere! The true Hebrew Covenant of YHWH – everlasting life through His Hebrew named Son Yahsha ha'Meshiakh is at last being revealed.

"And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed *till the time of the end*. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." – Dan. 12:9-10

Scholars Who Support A Hebrew Original New Covenant

Following is a listing of some linguistic and Biblical authorities who support a belief in a Hebrew origin of the NC: Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*, third edition, entirety.

D. Bivin and R. B. Blizzard, *Understanding the Difficult Words of Jesus*, entirety.

E. W. Bullinger, *The Companion Bible*, Appendix 95.

Dr. F. C. Burkitt, *The Earliest Sources for the Life of Jesus*, pp. 25, 29.

Prof. C. F. Burney, *The Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel*, entirety.

Epiphanius, *Panarion* 29:9:4 on Matthew.

Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, III 24:6 and 39:18; V8:2; VI 25:4.

Edward Gibbon, *History of Christianity*, two footnotes on p. 185.

Dr. Frederick C. Grant, *Roman Hellenism and the New Covenant*, p. 14.

Dr. George Howard, *The Tetragram and the New Covenant* in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, vol. 96/1 (1977), 63-83.

Also, *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew*, entirety.

Dr. George Lamsa, *The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts*, Introduction, pp. IX-XII.

Dr. Alfred F. Loisy, *The Birth of the Christian Religion and the Origin of the New Covenant*, pp. 66, 68.

Dr. Isaac Rabinowitz, *Ephphata...* in *Journal of Semitic Studies* vol. XVI (1971), pp. 151-156.

Ernest Renan, *The Life of Jesus*, pp. 90, 92.

Hugh J. Schonfield, *An Old Hebrew Text of St. Matthew's Gospel*, (1927) p. 7.

Dr. Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, p. 275.

R. B. Y. Scott, *The Original Language of the Apocalypse*, entirety.

Prof. Charles C. Torrey, *Documents of the Primitive Church*, entirety. Also, *Our Translated Gospels*, entirety.

Dr. James Scott Trimm, *The Semitic Origin of the New Covenant*, entirety.

Max Wiolcox, *The Semitism of Acts* (1965), entirety.

F. Zimmerman, *The Aramaic Origin of the Four Gospels*, entirety.

"...only a Remnant will be saved." Romans 9:27

The Remnant of YHWH

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