

Appendix I — The Original Languages

THE OLD TESTAMENT

The vast majority of the Old Testament is written in the Hebrew language. (A very small portion is written in Aramaic, which is closely related to Hebrew.) Besides the unusual letters, a distinctive characteristic of Hebrew is that it reads from the right to left. To find the book of Genesis, you need to look in what seems to be the back of the Hebrew Bible!

Psalm 23:1-3

מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד יְהוָה רֹעִי לֹא אֶחְסָר: 1

I will lack not my shepherd the LORD of David a psalm

בְּנֵאֻוֹת דְּשָׂא יִרְבִּיצֵנִי עַל־מֵי מְנוּחֹת יִנְהַלֵּנִי: 2

he leads me of rest waters along he makes me lie down new grass pastures in

נַפְשִׁי יִשׁוּבֵב יִנְחֵנִי בְּמַעְגְלֵי־צְדָק לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ: 3

his name for the sake of righteousness in paths of he leads me he restores my soul

Translation:

1 A psalm of David.

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters,

3 he restores my soul.

He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

THE NEW TESTAMENT

The entire New Testament is written in Greek. It was the common language of the Roman Empire. Therefore the advantage of writing in Greek was that it was widely understood.

John 3:16,17

16 οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον, ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν,
thus for he loved the God the world so that his son the only-begotten he gave

ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόληται ἀλλ' ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον.
so that everyone who believes in him not may be destroyed but he may have life eternal

οὐ γὰρ ἀπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἵνα κρίνη τὸν κόσμον,
not for he sent the God his son into the world so that he might judge the world

ἀλλ' ἵνα σωθῆ ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ.
but so that he might save the world through him

Translation:

16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."