

# How We Got Our Bible

## Part One

- I. The Languages of the Bible
  - A. Most of the Old Testament Was Written in Hebrew.
  - B. Parts of the Old Testament Were Written in Aramaic.
  - C. The New Testament Was Written in Greek.
- II. The Hebrew of the Old Testament
  - A. In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century There Was a Theory That the Hebrew of the Old Testament Was a Holy Ghost Language. That It Was Somehow a Special Language Beyond Usual Human Language.
  - B. However, Various Archaeological Discoveries Indicate That the Hebrew of the Bible Is the Same Hebrew Spoken by the Ancient Hebrews.
    1. Khirbet Qeiyafa Pottery Sherd (10<sup>th</sup> Century BC): This is an inscription on a 6 inch by 6 ½ inch trapezoidal pottery sherd that is an early example of Hebrew.
    2. Gezer Calendar (ca. 925 BC): A small limestone tablet discovered at the town of Gezer. It is an agricultural calendar written in Paleo-Hebrew.
    3. Samaria Ostraca (ca. 850–750 BC): A collection of pottery fragments that contain bookkeeping records from the treasury of King Ahab of Israel (1 Kings 16–22).
    4. Siloam Inscription (ca. 701 BC): An inscription inside the Siloam Tunnel commemorating the completion of the tunnel to bring water from the Gihon Spring to the Pool of Siloam in Jerusalem (2 Kings 18:13–18).
    5. Lachish Letters (ca. 598 BC): Letters written by military commanders at Lachish just before the destruction of the City by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar. They are written on Ostraca (pottery sherds) (2 Kings 24:10ff).
    6. The Dead Sea Scrolls (ca. 100 BC to 70 AD): Some of the scrolls discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls were commentaries on biblical books or other religious writings. Included among these is a very well-preserved commentary on Habakkuk written about 100 BC in Hebrew.

- III. The Greek of the New Testament
  - A. Before the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Some Believed that the Greek of the New Testament Was a Special Form of Biblical Greek. They Came to This Conclusion Because It Was Different from Modern Greek and from the Ancient Greek of Homer and the Greek Plays and Poems.
  - B. Late in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Archaeological Discoveries Unearthed Documents from the Time of the New Testament Written in Koine Greek (Greek from New Testament Times).
  - C. Examples of Koine Greek
    - 1. The Septuagint: The Translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek (ca. 3d Century BC).
    - 2. The Writings of the Apostolic Fathers: Church Leaders Immediately After the Apostles Wrote Letters and Religious Documents (2d Century).
    - 3. Greek Papyri: Thousands of Documents Including Letters, Legal Texts, Wills, Business Documents, Magical Spells, Rituals, and Hymns Make Up the Greek Papyrus Documents of Koine Greek (ca. 200 BC to 300 AD).
- IV. The Languages of the Bible and the Clarity of the Bible (Perspicuity).
  - A. The Scriptures Teach That They Are Clear and Understandable.
    - 1. Deuteronomy 6:6–7
    - 2. Deuteronomy 30:11–14
    - 3. Psalm 19:7
    - 4. “Have You Not Read” Matthew 12:3; 19:4; 21:42 etc.
    - 5. “To All the Saints” Philippians 1:1
    - 6. Colossians 4:6
    - 7. 1 Timothy 4:13
    - 8. Ephesians 6:1–3
  - B. Those Who Argue That the Scriptures Are Unclear or Overly Difficult Usually Do So to Maintain Control or Avoid Biblical Authority.