

## “Selected Studies in the Gospels”

### Introduction, Part 4

#### A. The original gospel that formed the basis for the Synoptic Gospels was first communicated, not in Greek, but in Hebrew.

1. Today’s translations are all based upon a Greek text, derived from a still earlier Greek text, which is itself a translation of an original Hebrew *Life of Yeshua*.
2. The entire New Testament is highly Hebraic.
3. To this day there has been a disproportionate stress placed on the study of Greek and Hellenism.

#### B. The “origins” of the Synoptic Gospels

1. The most commonly accepted theory is that Mark was the first of the Synoptic Gospels, and that Matthew and Luke used Mark in writing their Gospels.

#### C. The Aramaic Theory has so heavily influenced biblical scholarship that even ... Bible translators, have translated “Aramaic” when the original text specifically states “Hebrew.”

1. “Hebrew” *not* “Aramaic”
  - a. Acts 21:40 w/ Acts 22:2
  - b. Acts 26:14
  - c. Luke 23:38
2. Aramaic “loan words”
3. The language of the “ordinary people”

#### D. The Greek Theory

1. Some scholars believe that the “source” Gospel was originally written in Greek in spite of the fact that the “poor Greek” of the Synoptic Gospels is found basically only in literary works that are translations from Semitic originals, such as the Septuagint.
2. Many Gospel expressions are *not* just poor Greek, but actually *meaningless* in Greek.
  - a. Matthew 6:22-23 (Luke 11:34)
    - 1) **ὁπλοῦς** (*haplous*)—“*simple, single, whole, of the eye, good, fulfilling its office, sound.*”
    - 2) The expression “good eye” and “bad eye” are common Hebrew idioms for “generous” and “miserly” (or “stingy”).
      - a) Proverbs 23:6
      - b) Proverbs 28:22

#### E. The spoken language of the Jewish people at the time of Yeshua.

1. The late Jehoshua M. Grintz (Jewish Scholar).

2. Professor David Flusser (of the Hebrew University, and one of the world’s leading authorities on the NT and early Christianity).
3. Dr. Moshe Bar-Asher (the foremost Aramaic scholar at the Hebrew University).
4. Dr. Pinhas Lapide, Director of the School for Translators and Interpreters at Bar-Ilan University in Tel Aviv.
5. William Sanford LaSor, professor emeritus at Fuller Theological Seminary.
6. Professor Frank Cross, of Harvard University, an authority on the handwriting of the Dead Sea Scrolls.
7. M. L’Abbe’ J. T. Milik, a Polish priest, and one of the excavators of Qumran who prepared the scrolls from Cave IV for publication.

#### F. Extra-Biblical Evidence for Hebrew

1. The Church Fathers
  - a. Papias, Bishop of Hieropolis, in Asia Minor (mid-2nd century A.D.).
  - b. Irenaeus (120-202 A.D.), Bishop of Lyons, in France.
  - c. Origen (1st quarter of the 3rd cent), in his commentary on Matthew.
  - d. Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea (c. 325 A.D.).
  - e. Epiphanius (d. 403 A. D.).
  - f. Jerome (d. 420 A. D.).
  - g. There exists no early church tradition for a primitive Aramaic gospel.
2. The Dead Sea Scrolls include:
3. Coins
4. Inscriptions
5. Josephus
6. Rabbinic Literature

#### G. Recovering the original Hebrew Gospel<sup>1</sup>

1. Hebrew *Life of Yeshua* (36-37 CE).
2. Greek *Life of Yeshua* (41-42 CE).
3. Anthology (Reorganized Scroll) (43-44 CE)
4. First Reconstruction (55-56 CE)
5. Gospel of Luke (58-60 CE)
6. Gospel of Mark (65-66 CE)
7. Gospel of Matthew (68-69 CE)

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<sup>1</sup> David Bivin & Roy B. Blizzard, *Understanding the difficult words of Jesus* (Makor Foundation, 1983), pp. 94-95.