

VERBAL INSPIRATION IN THE MATERIA OF SCRIPTURE:
THE LANGUAGES OF SCRIPTURE

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VERBAL INSPIRATION IN THE MATERIA OF SCRIPTURE: THE LANGUAGES OF SCRIPTURE

INTRODUCTION

This paper is concerned with the *materia* of Scripture as it pertains not just to the individual words of Scripture, but also to the original languages of Scripture. In spite of the fact that the New Testament writers were primarily Jewish, the New Testament as we have it was written in Greek. This paper will discuss three possible reasons for this.

The first reason, and the one most often given, is that Greek was the κοινή διάλεκτος of the world at that time, and therefore it was the best language to use to spread the message as widely as possible.

They (the writers) desired to be understood, as in their preaching, so in their writing, not only by a part of the people, the people, for instance, with a classical training, but by all the people. The salvation of all the people, of the whole human race, was at stake!¹

A second possibility for this choice of language is the richness and clarity of expression of the Greek language, giving it the ability to convey the message in a more clear and unambiguous way than is possible in Hebrew.

The third possibility, and the stimulus for the paper, is related to the Veil of Moses (2 Cor. 3:15), and the questions that arise from this passage. It seems to say that the Jewish people have been “hardened”, and given a “veil”, which prohibits them from “seeing”, and therefore believing, the gospel message which is found in the New Testament. In this writer’s own conversion from Judaism, one of the questions that arose and yet remains to some extent, is this. From a Jewish perspective, if Christianity is the true faith, then God would have had to have “changed the rules” on the Jews somewhere in the middle, without telling them about it, the ultimate practical joke! After all, the Jews continue to worship God in the way they have for many centuries, in the way that He has always proscribed, often with a remarkable zeal. The original hypothesis for this paper, then, was to answer the question whether or not God actively

1 Pieper, Francis, D.D., *Christian Dogmatics, Vol I.*, © 1950 Concordia Publishing House, pg 256

put this veil in place to deliberately exclude the Jews from the gospel message, which the text implies, and whether the Greek language was then chosen in order to further alienate the Jewish people from the gospel message. If so, a dilemma exists, for God says repeatedly in the Scriptures that he wants all people to come to the knowledge of Him and be saved. (Joel 2:32, Ezekiel 18:32, 2 Peter 3:9) If, in fact, the Jews were deliberately excluded from the New Covenant, even if only temporarily, then this would contradict the clear Word of God. As this writer researched the times and culture of Palestine in the first century A.D., as well as the exegesis and word-studies of the texts in questions, it was found that there is indeed no dilemma, which will be demonstrated.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE DOCTRINE OF VERBAL INSPIRATION

We begin with the axiom that all of the Scriptures are God's Word. Although written by human writers, the Holy Spirit inspired them to write the exact words of God, and as such, God is able to speak to His people through them. In discussing the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, Lutheran theology distinguishes between the content and meaning of the texts and the actual words of the texts.

According to Lutheran theology, the *materia* of Scripture is the letters, syllables, words, and phrases that together constitute the Scriptures. The teachings and precepts of Scripture, considered as mere concepts, are also sometimes called the *materia* of Scripture. In this sense Scripture differs in no way from any other book. The *forma* of Scripture is its inspired meaning, the thoughts of God concerning our salvation and divine mysteries... The so-called causative authority of Scripture, its power, is due entirely to its *forma*.²

This doctrine of verbal inspiration of Scripture derives from Scripture itself.

...and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness; (2 Tim. 3:15-16 NASB)

We will return to this passage in the DISCUSSION section below.

² Preus, Robert D., *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism, Vol. I*, © 1970 Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO, pg 267

THE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE OF BIBLICAL TIMES

The Scriptures do not explicitly tell us the original language of mankind. We can not state that it was definitely Hebrew, but the Scriptures do give us a few clues in this regard, and the fact that the Scriptures themselves were written in Hebrew intimates that Hebrew was, if not the original language, at least one of the earliest. And the earliest scriptural passages support this hypothesis to some extent. “Adam called her *woman*”, אִשָּׁה, “because she was taken from *man*”, אִישׁ (Gen 2:23), two words which sound very much alike, much more alike than these words do in most other languages.

In any event, we know from Scripture that Hebrew was the language of the Patriarchs, although there were some distinct Aramaic influences even then due to the nomadic nature of the culture.

After his long sojourn in Aramaic-speaking Haran, Abraham and all his household must have been very fluent in that language before they migrated to Canaan and gradually adopted the tongue of its inhabitants. Isaac’s bride, Rebecca, came to him from Aramaic-speaking Padan-Aram; likewise both of Jacob’s wives, Leah and Rachel.³

In Gen. 31:47, Laban refers to *the witness cairn* in Aramaic as שְׂהֵדוּתָא, while Jacob calls it by its Hebrew (or Canaanite) name, גִּלְעָד.

At the time of the United Monarchy, Hebrew remained the language of the Israelites, although Aramaic influences continued, most notably seen in the later works of that period, the later period David Psalms and the Song of Songs. During the Divided Kingdom, and prior to the Babylonian exile, the language of the common people continued to be Hebrew, with Aramaic spoken only by the leaders and educated ones (2 Kings 18:26). However, things changed during the exile, and, under the influence of the Persian culture, the Jewish people began to speak primarily in Aramaic, with Hebrew being reserved for the Holy Writings only.

During the Babylonian Exile, the Jewish people began to forsake their ancestral Hebrew more and more for the Aramaic tongue, which had become the international language for diplomacy and commerce and the principal medium of communication between the

3 Archer, Gleason, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, © 1964,1974,1994 Moody Press, Chicago, pg. 144

Persian government and its subjects after the establishment of the Persian empire. As Jewish congregations became more uncertain of their Hebrew (although Hebrew never ceased to be studied and spoken by the learned class in Palestine right up to the second century A.D.), it became necessary for an interpreter to repeat to them in Aramaic the message which had just been read in the synagogue service from their Hebrew Bible.⁴

In the first century A.D., Palestine was under many influences previously unknown, specifically in the form of the emerging Greco-Roman presence. While the common people, the *am-h-aretz*, primarily spoke Aramaic, the more educated Jews and religious leaders did know and use the Greek language. The idea that the observant Jews of this time kept themselves separate from the Hellenistic culture is based on the supposed rabbinic injunction against learning the Greek language because it would take time away from study of Torah. However, further examination of the Rabbinic literature of the time indicates that there was no such prohibition against learning Greek, and that its study was considered to be on a par with learning a trade. The words *הכמה יונית* (*Greek wisdom*) is mentioned frequently in these writings, in terms which indicate that this wisdom could help the individual in his association with the educated Hellenistic circles of Palestine.⁵

There are numerous outside indications that Greek language and culture was quite firmly established in Palestine during this time. Flavius Josephus, the well-known Jewish historian, writes in the introduction to his book, *The Jewish War*, that he wrote it originally in Aramaic in order to be read by the diaspora Jews, and later translated it into Greek to make it accessible to the people of the Roman Empire.⁶ The archaeological excavations at the Beit Shearim synagogue not only discovered statues carved into the very walls of the synagogue, but most of the inscriptions found there were written in the Greek language. Additionally, one third of the ossuaries found in Palestine from that time bore inscriptions in Greek.⁷

4 Ibid., pg. 53

5 Lieberman, Saul 1950, 1962 *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine*, Studies in the Literary Transmission Beliefs and Manners of Palestine in the I Century B.C.E. - IV Century C.E., The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York

6 Josephus, Flavius, *The Jewish War*, Penguin Books, 1959, 1970, pg. 14

7 Smith, Morton, 1977, *Palestinian Judaism in the First Century*, from *Essays in Greco-Roman and Related Talmudic Literature*, KTAV Publishing House, New York

THE HEBREW LANGUAGE IN SCRIPTURE

The Hebrew language is a semitic language, and as such it shares many characteristics of other semitic languages. It is an ancient writing method which is consonantal, meaning that the letters are primarily consonants, with only a few exceptions, the most notable being the ם (*vav*), which can at times play the role of a vowel and at other times a consonant. Hebrew texts today represent vowel sounds using a set of small symbols, called *nikkud*, above or below the consonants, although most Hebrew scholars, including Martin Luther, believed that the original texts were written without *nikkud*.⁸

Another distinguishing character of Hebrew, and semitic languages in general, is the use of root words, which shows relationships between nouns, verbs, and other parts of speech that are not as apparent in other languages. For example, consider the root word, לָמַד (to learn) from which are derived the nouns תַּלְמִיד (student), and תַּלְמוּד (the study of the Torah), as well as the verb לִוְמַד (he learns) and the adjective לְמוּדֵי (those trained).

A more telling example is the Hebrew word שׁוּב (*to return*). Great significance is placed on this word and its intended meaning of “repentance” and “return” to God in the Hebrew Scriptures. Hebrew does not have an active or passive voice, however its use in the Scriptures indicates an active sense when describing normal life events (Gen. 8:12, Num. 23:5), but in the case of God’s act of bringing a person to repentance and faith, the word is interpreted in a more passive sense (Deut. 4:30, Deut. 30:1-2, Neh. 9:26) Even today, someone who leaves the faith of Judaism, and is later brought back into it, is referred to as a בְּאֵל-שׁוּבָה (lit. *owner of a return*). Notice that the term refers to an “owner” of return, not a “doer” of the act of returning, acknowledging implicitly God’s hand in the act of return.

⁸ Preus, Robert D., pg 308

Nouns can be expressed in either masculine or feminine, and either singular or plural forms, and each form has its own distinctive ending. Adjectives and verbs match nouns in gender and number and have the same endings as the nouns, except in a few irregular cases. There is, however, no differentiation between noun cases in the Hebrew grammatical structure, so that it is not always clear if a particular noun is the subject or object of a phrase. Possessives, on the other hand, are represented with declinational suffixes, so there does exist a genitive case of sorts, although the construct is very different from the Greek.

These and other distinguishing characteristics makes Hebrew a concise and spare language, and rather complex thoughts can be conveyed in few words as compared with other languages, as is evident when reading a translation side by side.

The root word concept leads to some very profound and delightful subtleties and plays on words that are completely lost in a translation to any other language. For example, the words *הָיָה* (*he was*), *הוּא* (*he is*), and *יִהְיֶה* (*he will be*), all look very much alike. In fact, if you eliminate the *nikkud* and place each word on top of each other, like a set of transparent slides, the result is the tetragrammaton, *יהוה*, the sacred name of God. This one word then tells us more about the eternal nature of God than several sentences in any other language.

Another delightful play on words is found in Jeremiah 1:11-12, which reads, The word of the Lord came to me saying, “What do you see, Jeremiah?” And I said, “I see of rod of **an almond tree** (שֶׁקֶד).” Then the Lord said to me, “You have seen well, for **I am watching** (שֶׁקֶד) over My word to perform it.

In English, these two verses are quite enigmatic. The reader must ask what an almond tree has to do with anything, or why God would be pleased with Jeremiah for seeing one. However, the similarities between the two words make it very clear to the Hebrew reader that Jeremiah’s vision of the almond tree presents a strong visual message. God is telling Jeremiah that He is taking a very active role in the speaking and preservation of His Word as it is to be spoken to the people of Jerusalem through Jeremiah.

THE ARAMAIC LANGUAGE IN SCRIPTURES

As mentioned above, the primary source of Aramaic writings in the Scriptures are found in books written during or after the Babylonian Exile. These include Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and to a certain extent, Esther⁹, although as has been shown, there are other short instances of Aramaic use in the earlier writings. While it is important to note the use of Aramaic in the Scriptures, it is beyond the scope of this paper to do discuss this language in any additional detail.

THE GREEK LANGUAGE IN SCRIPTURES

The autographs, the original manuscripts, of New Testament are purported to be written in Greek. However, these autographs are not extant, and there have been some question whether or not some, if not all, of the synoptic gospels, particularly Matthew, may have originally been written in Hebrew. For one thing, some of the writings of the early church fathers support this. For example, Eusebius writes of this in his *Ecclesiastical History* Vol. III 39, 16. He quotes Papias, from the mid-second century A.D., and therefore one of the earliest witnesses to the original texts, and one who very possibly did have access to the autographs.

Matthew put down the words of the Lord in the Hebrew language, and others have translated them, each as best he could.¹⁰

In Volume VI, 8,2 he quotes Origen.

The first [gospel], composed in the Hebrew language, was written by Matthew ... for those who came to faith from Judaism.¹¹

These writings of the early church fathers are supported by the fact that these gospels contain many Hebraisms which are quite awkward and unnatural in the Greek texts. For just one example, we read, *When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem.* (Luke 9:51 ESV) The Hebrew word פָּנָה (*face*) has a somewhat broader usage in

9 Archer, Gleason, Jr., pg 144

10 Biven, David, and Blizzard, Roy, Jr., 1983, *Understanding the Difficult Words of Jesus, New Insights from a Hebraic Perspective*, Destiny Image Publishers, Center for Judaic-Christian Studies, Dayton Ohio, pg 24

11 Ibid., pg 24

the Hebrew than the Greek word πρόσωπον, and it is used countless times in the Old Testament in this broader sense. Hagar flees *from the face* (מִפְּנֵיָהּ) of Sarai (Genesis 16:6,8), God *set His face* (אֶת-פָּנָיו) against idolators (Lev. 20:3,5,6), God *shines His face* (פָּנָיו) upon those whom He blesses (Num. 6:25), and He commands us not to have other gods *before His face* (עַל-פָּנָיו) (Ex. 20:3)¹²

DISCUSSION

There is no doubt that Greek was indeed the κοινή διάλεκτος of the world at that time. Palestine was the center of trading for the world at the time, with goods and traders traveling the Via Maris in ever increasing numbers. Therefore, the exposure to the language and the philosophy of the Greek culture was unavoidable even in Palestine. Therefore, there is no real argument regarding the first response, which was that Greek would have been the best language to use to spread the gospel message as widely as possible throughout the world.

The fact that the Bible is complete in more than one language evidences that the confusion of tongues does not frustrate the verbal promulgation of God's word. Yet in view of the diversity of languages, it may seem incredible to some that God should almost exclusively choose Hebrew and Greek from earth's many languages to encapsulate the literary deposit of his revelation. This choice was not made, however, by either the Hebrews or the Greeks; the gospel is in fact "a stumblingblock to Jews and folly to Greeks (I Cor. 1:23 NEB). God in sovereign freedom chose the Hebrews and their language as a medium of revelation, and, to press the gospel unto the Gentiles as well as dispersed Jews, he chose Greek as the vehicle for the good news of redemptive fulfillment."¹³

The second response has also been shown to be valid, although a few examples of the differences between the Hebrew and Greek languages would be appropriately discussed here. We return to 2 Tim. 3:15-16. The Greek text makes this passage even more specific than its English rendering, as it begins with the words πᾶσα γραφή θεόπνευστος, which is literally

¹² Biven, David, pg. 123

¹³ Henry, Carl F.H., 1979, *God, Revelation, and Authority Vol. III, God who speaks and shows. Fifteen Theses, Part Two*, Word Books, Publishers, Waco Texas

translated “All Scripture (is) God-breathed”. A simple word-study tells us that the word γραφή is a singular, feminine nominative case noun meaning “sacred writing”, or “Scripture”, and therefore it is the subject of the sentence. It is very clear that the writer of this passage meant to say specifically that the writing itself, the *materia* of Scripture as well as the *forma*, is inspired by God. If, on the other hand, Paul had meant to convey the idea that the *forma* alone was inspired by God, (all the ideas and teachings in the Scriptures is God-breathed), the Greek would have readily allowed him to so do had he used the dative case of the noun, γραφῆ, together with the subject πάντα (everything, all). This usage would have then conveyed a very different meaning. But that is, of course, not what he wrote. On the other hand, the Hebrew language does not make a distinction between the nominative, accusative, or dative cases, so that the Hebrew words כָּל מִכְתָּב , (*all sacred writing*), could only have been ambiguous in this sentence and, therefore, could have been interpreted either way, leaving room for doubt. The second response to our question, then, is also reasonable and widely accepted without much argument. Due to its richness of expression, the Greek can communicate delicate and intricate concepts in ways that are very difficult to convey in Hebrew.

The third response, then, will be the focus of the rest of this discussion. We start by looking at the text in question, which is taken from Paul’s second letter to the Corinthians.

*not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end. But **their minds were hardened**. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. But **when one turns to the Lord**, the veil is removed. (2 Cor. 3:13-16 ESV)*

Two verbs in this passage deserve special attention. The first is the Greek verb, ἔπωρώθη, a third person singular indicative aorist tense, with the passive voice, indicating that this hardening is something which happened passively to the Jews. The cause of this “hardening” is not apparent from the context. Did God harden the Jews deliberately? Or is there another explanation? In order to answer these questions, we look at Paul’s letter to the

Romans, where we see a very similar passive/active construct, which has caused a great deal of misunderstanding, and has indeed led directly to the incorrect teaching of double predestination, due in large part to its ambiguity in translation. for it is not ambiguous at all in the Greek.

What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath **prepared for destruction**, in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which **he has prepared beforehand** for glory (Romans 9:22-23 ESV)

The verbs translated as *prepared* in English are significant. Not only are these different verbs, but the the voice of the verb in verse 22 (κατηρτισμένα) is passive, while the verb in verse 23 (προητοίμασεν) is in the active voice, and this makes the passage very clear that the “vessels of wrath” are responsible (prepared) for their own destruction, while God Himself prepares and calls the “vessels of glory”. In other words, the Greek text of the passage most used by Calvinists to support the heresy of double predestination actually refutes it in no uncertain terms. Francis Pieper discusses this passage in this way.

In two respects the vessels of wrath differ radically from the vessels of mercy. While it is said of the vessels of mercy in the active voice that God had afore prepared them unto glory, the passive voice is used of the vessels of wrath: ready, ripe for destruction. **The passive construction is not to be regarded as accidental, but as intended**, since the vessels of wrath and the vessels of mercy are here compared. The more we note how the words "Which He had afore prepared unto glory" emphasize God's work in the vessels of mercy, the more it strikes us that in regard to the vessels of wrath, in so far as they are "fitted to destruction", there is no mention whatever of any "doing" by God.¹⁴

As in Paul’s words to the Romans, the passive forms we see in his words to the Corinthians are also intentional, and inspired by God, so that we can understand clearly what Paul is telling us.

The second verb of note in the 2 Corinthians passage is ἐπιστρέψῃ. This verb is in the same tense as the verb above, but in the **active** voice, indicating an action by the individual to turn (return) to the Lord. Nearly all the uses of this verb in the active voice in the Greek texts is understood in a somewhat passive way. For example, “and he will turn many” (Luke 1:16), “and someone brings him back” (James 5:19). This verb is also used in the septuagint in place

14 Pieper, Francis, *Christian Dogmatics*, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO Vol. III, pg 497

of the Hebrew verb שׁוּב (Isaiah 6:10, Matt. 13:10), the significance of this word's usage as an indicator of God's active work of calling people to repentance and faith has previously been discussed. In this context, the use of this verb makes it clear that Jewish people, even those under "the veil of Moses", can be, and are, called to faith and "return" by God, as are those of all other nations of the world.

Paul clarifies this beautifully in his letter to the Romans, where he makes the analogy of the Kingdom of God as being like an olive tree. (Romans 11:16-25) The natural branches are broken off the root of this tree, not capriciously, but because of their own unbelief and rejection of Christ (the root). This then leaves room for wild branches from all ἔθνος (*nations*) to be grafted to the root, where they grow and thrive, giving the superficial appearance of a "new tree". Who are these ἔθνος? The word is oftentimes translated *Gentile*, a word which includes all nations except the Jews. However, the word at times actually refers to the Jews as a nation (John 11:48-50, John 18:35) among nations. Therefore, when Jesus Christ gave the great commission to the apostles to teach the message to *all nations*, πάντα τὰ ἔθνη (Matt. 28:19), the nation of Israel is included. R.C.H. Lenski, commenting on this passage, explains this analogy with these words.

So great is God's grace that, even after unbelief has set in, grace is still able in many cases at last to overcome such unbelief. This was true regarding the Jews. In fact, their case is not a mere parallel to that of the Gentile. This is the final point drawn from the figure of the olive tree. Now Paul adds the figure of the wild olive tree with a new *tertium*, the relation of the branches to these trees...

God's grace must first cut the Gentile out of his natural wild olive tree and unnaturally graft him into the good olive tree. The Jews, however, never grew as branches of the wild tree; they were only broken out of the good tree, and the natural procedure would be to put them back into their own native tree. This the Gentile Christian ought to remember about himself, about any other Gentile who is converted, and about any Jews who may become converts.

The argument is this: if God is able to perform two acts in saving the Gentile, how much more will he be able to perform the one act which is alone required to save a Jew? Looked at from this angle, we must, indeed, say that it is a tremendous deed to pry a pagan loose from his paganism, to which is then added the task of uniting him with the covenant (Abraham) from which the Jews fell away. Now a Jew does not need the former operation, for he is already free from paganism; he needs only to be restored to

his own olive tree.” The point, however, is not that it is much easier to save a Jew than a pagan. The same great power of grace is required to save either. The point is that, if God has done a thing that one must consider “contrary to nature”, he certainly demonstrates that he is able also to do a thing which we must consider as “in accord with nature”.¹⁵

Upon closer examination, we then see that the root of the tree remains the same as it has ever been, and that it is Christ Himself. However, the tree is now “new” in the sense that it represents Christ’s fulfillment of the old covenant, and the inclusion of all nations in the tree, including the Jews. The “branches” of the Gentile nations remain wild branches, distinct and different from each other, as well as from the regrafted natural branches, and therefore the tree looks somewhat different than it did when it contained only natural branches. Each branch, through its connection to the vine, produces fruit (John 15:4-5). In the grafting analogy, the fruit of each branch, then, may be slightly different, but each has been called to faith by God, and each bears its own fruit as God wills. While there is no difference between Jew and Gentile in our sinfulness and need for redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ (Romans 10:12), the Jewish Christian does have a distinctly different role to play within the church. This role is not of lesser or greater value than any of the other “branches” of the tree, merely different.

The Jewish Christian, according to Paul, never ceases to be a Jew. He remains providentially part of Judaism, and he therefore carries on his work primarily for the salvation (*soteria*) of Israel.... In this connection, Paul will state that the Jewish Christians are the nucleus of Israel. Israel remains a historical entity, held together by the divine purpose of God, which does not change - God is faithful. But it is only through that nucleus that they will be saved, that is to say, be enabled really to be Jews, and thereby to render that service to mankind for which God had destined them.¹⁶

CONCLUSION

The *materia* of Scripture was inspired by God, and therefore He chose, not only each individual word, but also the languages of the individual writings of Scripture. Each word is

15 Lenksi, R.C.H., *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans*, 1936, Augsburg Publishing House, pg 711-713

16 Piper, Dr. Otto A., 1960, *The Church Meets Judaism*, Augsburg Publishing House

inspired and chosen for a reason, and God speaks to us through them today. The Scriptures reveal that God originally chose the Jews to take His Word to the world. This could best be accomplished by having them written in the language of the people, Hebrew and Aramaic, as this would ensure that the Israelites keep the Scriptures holy and preserve them throughout the long time periods of those ancient days.

This paper has discussed three responses to the question, “Why were the apostolic Scriptures written in the Greek language?” The first response, that Greek was the best language to spread this message to the widest audience, is particularly valid. It was truly the language of the world at that time. We see the spread of Christianity from a small group of no more than a few hundred followers (Acts 1:15), in a relatively obscure area of the Middle-east, into all the world today. All nations truly are hearing the message of Christianity through the words of the apostles. When the apostles were given the great commission of proclaiming the gospel message of Jesus Christ to all nations (Matthew 28:18-20), God chose the Greek language to accomplish this purpose so that all people, including the Jews, would now have access to them.

The second response, that the Greek language would have added a richness of expression and clarity not available in the Hebrew or Aramaic languages in order to make the message unmistakably clear, is also valid. Although it has been beyond the scope of this paper to do a detailed analysis of the differences between these languages, the point has been demonstrated from the Scriptures themselves, with several examples of the usage and interpretations of each.

However, the third response, that the Greek language was chosen by God to purposely exclude the Jewish people, or to make it more difficult for them to be saved, has been shown from the Scriptures to be false. This paper demonstrated the presence of many Hebraisms within the Greek text, placed there under the inspiration of God. These many Hebraisms serve to verify that the gospels were indeed written by Jewish authors, at the time they were purported to be written. Secondly, they show God’s hand and inspiration in the phenomenal consistency of the both the *forma* and *materia* of Scripture, extending across languages and time periods. God has

loved the Jews throughout history (I Kings 10:9), as He has loved all nations (John 3:16). God tells us in His Word that His will is for all people to return, to know Him and be saved (2 Peter 3:9). Therefore God has not caused the hardening of Jewish hearts, nor brought the veil of Moses upon them, neither has He excluded anyone from His grace and salvation. Stony, stubborn, and unbelieving hearts have come upon many of the Jews, as they have upon all unbelievers of every nation, because of their own rejection of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Therefore, there is no need for anyone, Jew or Gentile, to search to “find his place” within the church, for that place has already been given to us by God. Each of us, Jew and Gentile, is a branch on the one true tree, called to faith by God’s grace, and grafted, or regrafted, into the True Vine. Through that Vine, and only through that Vine, do we bear the fruit God has given us to bear.

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