

What Language was the Bible written in?

Dear Yahoo!:

What language was the first Bible written in?

Nonni

San Carlos, California

Dear Nonni:

Like many ancient works, the oldest parts of the bible were passed along orally before they were ever written down. Many devout Jews and Christians believe that the full text of the bible was given to Moses by God on Mount Sinai. Though the Bible's earliest origin may always be a matter of faith, it remains a fact that after the Bible was recorded, many different versions existed. It wasn't until the first century B.C.E (Before the Common Era, aka B.C.) that Jews settled on the canon of their scripture, and it was around 400 C.E. (Common Era, aka A.D.) that Christians agreed on all the books of their New Testament. Today, countless translations and interpretations of the Bible exist in English and many other languages.

The oldest written parts of the Bible found were transcribed in three languages. What scholars call the Hebrew Bible (the same books Jews call the Tanakh or Written Torah and Christians call the Old Testament) was first written in Hebrew with a few chapters of the books of Ezra and Daniel recorded in Aramaic. Hebrew had long been the language of the Jewish people, so their scriptures were passed down in Hebrew. Some of the books of the Hebrew Bible may have been written as far back as 1,400 B.C.E.

Aramaic is a Semitic language that was widely spoken from 600 to 200 B.C.E. in the near Middle East. It was one of the Common languages of the region until the 13th century, when Arabic became more prominent. Many people believe Jesus and his apostles spoke Aramaic.

The Christians New Testament was written in the first century C.E. in the common Greek of the Mediterranean area and parts of the Middle East at the time. This form of Greek is called Koine Greek. It developed from classical Greek spread by the conquests of Alexander the Great. As different people began to use the tongue, it evolved and changed into Koine Greek between 300 B.C.E. and 300 C.E. This form may have been the second language of Jesus and his apostles -- after all, the gospels note that Jesus spoke with Pontius Pilate, who would have been more likely to understand Greek than Aramaic. The New Testament was probably written in Greek because it was the most common language around the Mediterranean at the time.

After the Roman Empire itself was Christianized and Latin became the common language, the entire Bible was translated into Latin. The first Latin version is called the Vulgate. In the mid-15th century, when Johannes Gutenberg invented movable type, the Latin Vulgate edition of the Christian Bible was the first work he printed.

History of the Bible - www.literatureclassics.com/ancientpaths/bibhist.html

Jesus Spoke Hebrew - www.sharesong.org/JESSUSSPOKEHEBREW.htm

A Brief Overview of Bible History <http://users.rcn.com/lanat/biblehistory.htm>

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