

Why So Much Hebrew?

Then the Lord said, "Should I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? Abraham is to become a great and powerful nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed through him. For I have chosen him so that he will command his children and his house after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just. This is how the Lord will fulfill to Abraham what He promised him." – Genesis 18:17-19 HCSB

God looked throughout the world¹ for someone who would help Him accomplish His mission. He had all the kingdoms, empires, languages and cultures to pick from. He considered the Chinese empire, but moved on. He glanced toward the Persians but thought better. Finally, he settled on a pagan man whose father was an idolater. That man was Abraham.

The deciding factor was the fact that God, in His prescience, knew that Abraham would faithfully teach his children, not only to do right, but how to teach their children to also do right. Abraham was chosen out of all the people of the earth because he would faithfully teach a Way, a Path, to all the generations that followed after him.

God could have waited for the beautiful French language to arise. He could have waited for the practical and information laden English language to become available; but He did not. Of all the languages in the world, He chose Hebrew.

Understanding Hebrew is so foundational to a proper application of the Scriptures that it is essential even to understanding the New Testament. We generally think in Greek when we study the New Testament, but we mustn't forget that although it was passed on to us in Greek, the authors were all Jews! They thought in Hebrew.

Every language describes a mindset. I speak several languages and I often find that if I am faced with an apparently insoluble problem, changing the language I use to think about the problem soon results in a solution. I don't simply use different words. I think differently when I think in French, Korean or ASL. There are some concepts in one language for which there are no words in another!

Part of our problem is that we are trying to apply American mindsets to Jewish concepts and our view is getting skewed. For instance, when Isaiah claimed to have a vision², he used the word "hazon." Did you know that there are three different Hebrew words for a prophetic message? "Massa" is a verbal communication; "dvar" is a divine word; "hazon" means vision (whether waking or dreaming). Having no history of direct revelations from God, English doesn't even have these words.

Being generally dissatisfied with the state of Christianity today (not with Christ, mind you, but the religion that has grown around our false ideas of Christ) I have decided to start over; go back to the beginning; back to Abraham's language – Hebrew.

¹ Ezekiel 22:30

² Isaiah 1:1