

~LANGUAGE (1201)

.. Origin Of Speech

.. What Accounts For The Diversity Of Languages

.. From Abraham Onward

- Any means, vocal or other, by which feelings or thoughts are expressed or communicated. Generally, however, language means a body of words and the methods of combining these as understood by a community of people. The **Hebrew** and **Greek** words for tongue signify language. **[Int]**
- Here I am bringing in upon you men a nation from far away, O house of Israel, is the utterance of Yehowah. It is an enduring nation. It is a nation of long ago, a nation whose language you do not know, and you cannot hear understandingly what they speak. (**Jeremiah 5:15**) **Footnote**
- Cretans and Arabians, we hear them speaking in our tongues about the magnificent things of God. (**Acts of Apostles 2:11**)
- The **Hebrew** term for **lip** is used in a similar way.
- Now all the earth continued to be of one language and of one set of words. (**Genesis 11:1**) **Footnote**
- **Language**, of course, is most intimately associated with the mind, which employs the speech organs throat, tongue, lips, and teeth as its instruments.
- Thus, the **Encyclopaedia Britannica [1959 edition]** states: **Thinking and words go together. For thinking, to be clear, has to rely upon names, or nouns, and their various associations with one another. While some minor reservations are justifiable there is an overwhelming mass of evidence that fortifies the contention stated above no words, no thinking. [Vol. 5, p. 740]**
- **Words are man's principal means of receiving, storing, manipulating, and transmitting information.**

See Also TONGUE

.. Origin Of Speech

- The first human, Adam, was created with a vocabulary, as well as with **the ability to coin new words** and thus expand his vocabulary. Without a God-given vocabulary the newly created man would have been no more able to comprehend verbal instructions from his Creator than were the unreasoning animals.
- And God proceeded to create the man in his image, in God's image he created him, male and female he created them. (**Genesis 1:27**)
- Further, God blessed them and God said to them; Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it, and have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and every living creature that is moving upon the earth. (**Genesis 1:28**)
- And God went on to say; Here I have given to you all vegetation bearing seed which is on the surface of the whole earth and every tree on which there is the fruit of a tree bearing seed. To you let it serve as food. (**Genesis 1:29**)
- And to every wild beast of the earth and to every flying creature of the heavens and to everything moving upon the earth in which there is life as a soul I have given all green vegetation for food. And it came to be so. (**Genesis 1:30**)
- And Yehowah God also laid this command upon the man; From every tree of the garden you may eat to satisfaction. (**Genesis 2:16**)
- But as for the tree of the knowledge of good and bad you must not eat from it, for in the day you eat from it you will positively die. (**Genesis 2:17**)
- And Yehowah God went on to say; It is not good for the man to continue by himself. I am going to make a helper for him, as a complement of him. (**Genesis 2:18**)
- Now Yehowah God was forming from the ground every wild beast of the field and every flying creature of the heavens, and he began bringing them to the man to see what he would call each one, and whatever the man would call it, each living soul, that was its name. (**Genesis 2:19**)

- So the man was calling the names of all the domestic animals and of the flying creatures of the heavens and of every wild beast of the field, but for man there was found no helper as a complement of him. (**Genesis 2:20**)
- But these men, like unreasoning animals born naturally to be caught and destroyed, will, in the things of which they are ignorant and speak abusively, even suffer destruction in their own course of destruction. (**2 Peter 2:12**)
- Yet these men are speaking abusively of all the things they really do not know, but all the things that they do understand naturally like the unreasoning animals, in these things they go on corrupting themselves. (**Jude 1:10**)
- So, while **only intelligent man of all earth's creatures has the ability of true speech**, language did not originate with man but with man's All-Wise Creator, Yehowah God.
- At that Yehowah said to him; Who appointed a mouth for man or who appoints the speechless or the deaf or the clear-sighted or the blind? Is it not I, Yehowah? (**Exodus 4:11**)
- So now go, and I myself shall prove to be with your mouth and I will teach you what you ought to say. (**Exodus 4:12**)
- On the origin of language, the well-known lexicographer **Ludwig Koehler** wrote: **There has been, especially in former times, much speculation as to how human speech came into being. Writers strove to explore animal language.**
- For animals also are able to express audibly by sounds and groups of sounds their feelings and sensations, such as contentment, fear, emotion, threat, anger, sexual desire and satisfaction in its fulfillment, and perhaps many other things. However manifold these animal expressions may be, they lack concept and thought, the essential domain of human language.
- After showing how men can explore the physiological aspect of human speech, he adds; But what actually happens in speech, how the spark of perception kindles the spirit of the child, or of mankind generally, to become the spoken word, eludes our grasp. Human

speech is a secret, it is a divine gift, a miracle. [Journal of Semitic Studies, Manchester, 1956, p. 11]

- **Language had been employed for untold ages prior to man's appearance on the universal scene. Yehowah God communicated with his heavenly firstborn Son and evidently used him in communicating with his other spirit sons. Hence that firstborn Son was called, **the Word**.**
- **In the beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god. (John 1:1)**
- **He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. (Colossians 1:15)**
- **Because by means of him all other things were created in the heavens and upon the earth, the things visible and the things invisible, no matter whether they are thrones or lordships or governments or authorities. All other things have been created through him and for him. (Colossians 1:16)**
- **And to the angel of the congregation in Laodicea write. These are the things that the Amen says, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation by God. (Revelation 3:14)**
- **The apostle Paul made inspired reference to tongues of men and of angels.**
- **If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels but do not have love, I have become a sounding piece of brass or a clashing cymbal. (1 Corinthians 13:1)**
- **Yehowah God speaks to his angelic creatures in their tongue and they carry out his word.**
- **Bless Yehowah, O you angels of his, mighty in power, carrying out his word, by listening to the voice of his word. (Psalms 103:20)**
- **Since He and his spirit sons are not reliant upon an atmosphere, which makes possible the sound waves and vibrations necessary for human speech, angelic language is obviously beyond human conception or attainment.**

- **As God's messengers, angels therefore employed human language to talk with men, and angelic messages are recorded in Hebrew**
- **And Yehowah's angel proceeded to call to Abraham the second time out of the heavens. ([Genesis 22:15](#))**
- **And to say; By myself I do swear, is the utterance of Yehowah, that by reason of the fact that you have done this thing and you have not withheld your son, your only one. ([Genesis 22:16](#))**
- **I shall surely bless you and I shall surely multiply your seed like the stars of the heavens and like the grains of sand that are on the seashore, and your seed will take possession of the gate of his enemies. ([Genesis 22:17](#))**
- **And by means of your seed all nations of the earth will certainly bless themselves due to the fact that you have listened to my voice. ([Genesis 22:18](#))**
- **Aramaic**
- **This is what he said; As for the fourth beast, there is a fourth kingdom that will come to be on the earth, that will be different from all the other kingdoms, and it will devour all the earth and will trample it down and crush it. ([Daniel 7:23](#))**
- **And as for the ten horns, out of that kingdom there are ten kings that will rise up, and still another one will rise up after them, and he himself will be different from the first ones, and three kings he will humiliate. ([Daniel 7:24](#))**
- **And he will speak even words against the Most High, and he will harass continually the holy ones themselves of the Supreme One. And he will intend to change times and law, and they will be given into his hand for a time, and times and half a time. ([Daniel 7:25](#))**
- **And the Court itself proceeded to sit, and his own rulership they finally took away, in order to annihilate him and to destroy him totally. ([Daniel 7:26](#))**
- **And the kingdom and the rulership and the grandeur of the kingdoms under all the heavens were given to the people who**

are the holy ones of the Supreme One. Their kingdom is an indefinitely lasting kingdom, and all the rulerships will serve and obey even them. ([Daniel 7:27](#))

- Greek
- And the seventh angel blew his trumpet. And loud voices occurred in heaven, saying; The kingdom of the world did become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will rule as king forever and ever. ([Revelation 11:15](#))
- The cited texts being written in those **languages** respectively.

· What Accounts For The Diversity Of Languages

- According to **language** academies, about **3,000 tongues** are spoken today throughout the earth. Some are spoken by hundreds of millions of persons, others by fewer than a thousand.
- Though the ideas expressed and communicated may be basically the same, there are many ways to express them. The Bible history alone explains the origin of this strange diversity in human communication.
- Up until some point after the global Flood, all mankind continued to be of one **language**, literally, **one lip**, and of one set of words, vocabulary.
- Now all the earth continued to be of **one language and of one set of words**. ([Genesis 11:1](#))
- The Bible indicates that the **language** later called **Hebrew** was that original, one language.
- As will be shown, this does not mean that all other languages stemmed from and are related to **Hebrew**, but that **Hebrew preceded** all other languages.

See Also HEBREW 2

- The Genesis account describes the uniting of some part of the post-Flood human family in a project that opposed God's will as stated to Noah and his sons.

- And God went on to bless Noah and his sons and to say to them, Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth. ([Genesis 9:1](#))
- Instead of spreading out and filling the earth, they determined to centralize human society, concentrating their residence on a site in what became known as the Plains of Shinar in Mesopotamia. Evidently this was also to become a religious center, with a religious tower.
- And it came about that in their journeying eastward they eventually discovered a valley plain in the land of Shinar, and they took up dwelling there. ([Genesis 11:2](#))
- And they began to say, each one to the other; Come on! Let us make bricks and bake them with a burning process. So brick served as stone for them, but bitumen served as mortar for them. ([Genesis 11:3](#))
- They now said; Come on! Let us build ourselves a city and also a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a celebrated name for ourselves, for fear we may be scattered over all the surface of the earth. ([Genesis 11:4](#))
- Almighty God gave their presumptuous project a setback by breaking up their unity of action, accomplishing this by confusing their common **language**.
- This made impossible any coordinated work on their project and led to their scattering to all parts of the globe. The confusion of their **language** would also hinder or slow down future progress in a wrong direction, a God-defying direction, since it would limit mankind's ability to combine its intellectual and physical powers in ambitious schemes and also make it difficult to draw upon the accumulated knowledge of the different **language** groups formed knowledge, not from God, but gained through human experience and research.
- See! This only I have found, that the true God made mankind upright, but they themselves have sought out many plans. ([Ecclesiastes 7:29](#))
- They have acted ruinously on their own part. They are not his children, the defect is their own. A generation crooked and twisted! ([Deuteronomy 32:5](#))

- **So, while it introduced a major divisive factor into human society, the confusion of human speech actually benefited human society in retarding the attainment of dangerous and hurtful goals.**
- **And Yehowah proceeded to go down to see the city and the tower that the sons of men had built. ([Genesis 11:5](#))**
- **After that Yehowah said; Look! They are one people and there is one language for them all, and this is what they start to do. Why, now there is nothing that they may have in mind to do that will be unattainable for them. ([Genesis 11:6](#))**
- **Come now! Let us go down and there confuse their language that they may not listen to one another's language. ([Genesis 11:7](#))**
- **Accordingly Yehowah scattered them from there over all the surface of the earth, and they gradually left off building the city. ([Genesis 11:8](#))**
- **That is why its name was called Babel, because there Yehowah had confused the language of all the earth, and Yehowah had scattered them from there over all the surface of the earth. ([Genesis 11:9](#))**
- **Be injurious, O you peoples, and be shattered to pieces, and give ear, all you in distant parts of the earth! Gird yourselves, and be shattered to pieces! Gird yourselves, and be shattered to pieces! ([Isaiah 8:9](#))**
- **Plan out a scheme, and it will be broken up! Speak any word, and it will not stand, for God is with us! ([Isaiah 8:10](#))**
- **One has only to consider certain developments in our own times, resulting from accumulated secular knowledge and man's misuse thereof, to realize what God foresaw long ago would develop if the effort at Babel were allowed to go unhindered.**
- **Philology, the comparative study of languages, generally classifies languages into distinct families. The **parent language** of each major family usually has not been identified, much less is there any evidence pointing to any one **parent language** as the source of all the thousands of tongues now spoken.**

- The Bible record does not say that all **languages** descended, or branched off, from Hebrew. In what is commonly called the Table of Nations (**Genesis Chapter 10**), the descendants of Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, are listed and in each case are grouped according to their families, according to their tongues, in their lands, by their nations.
- From these the population of the isles of the nations was spread about in their lands, each according to its tongue, according to their families, by their nations. (**Genesis 10:5**)
- These were the sons of Ham according to their families, according to their tongues, in their lands, by their nations. (**Genesis 10:20**)
- These were the sons of Shem according to their families, according to their tongues, in their lands, according to their nations. (**Genesis 10:31**)
- These were the families of the sons of Noah according to their family descents, by their nations, and from these the nations were spread about in the earth after the deluge. (**Genesis 10:32**)
- It appears, therefore, that, when miraculously confusing human language, Yehowah God produced, not dialects of **Hebrew**, but a number of completely new languages, each capable of expressing the full range of human feeling and thought.
- Thus, after God confused their language, not only did the builders at Babel lack one set of words;
- Now all the earth continued to be of one language and of one set of words. (**Genesis 11:1**)
- One common vocabulary, but they also lacked a common grammar, a common way of expressing the relationship between words. **Professor S. R. Driver** stated: Languages, however, differ not only in grammar and roots, but also in the manner in which ideas are built up into a sentence. Different races do not **think** in the same way, and consequently the forms taken by the sentence in different languages are not the same. [A Dictionary of the Bible, edited by J. Hastings, 1905, Vol. IV, p. 791]
- Thus, different languages require quite different thought patterns, making it difficult for a new learner to think in the language.

- It may be that there are so many kinds of speech sounds in the world, and yet no kind is without meaning. (**1 Corinthians 14:10**)
- If, then, I do not understand the force of the speech sound, I shall be a foreigner to the one speaking, and the one speaking will be a foreigner to me. (**1 Corinthians 14:11**)
- This served Yehowah's purpose of keeping his faithful people and their way of worship screened off for about 1,800 years until the Septuagint version, the first translation of the Bible was made around **300 B.C.E.** Thus other defiant people could not learn the way of the truth, because they did not speak the language of truth, and so they were kept separate and distinct during that time.
- This is also why a **literal** translation of something said or written in an unfamiliar language may seem illogical, often causing persons to say; **But it does not make sense!**
- So, it appears that, when Yehowah God confused the speech of those at Babel, he first blotted out all memory of their previous common language and then introduced into their minds not only new vocabularies but also changed thought patterns, producing new grammars.
- No insolent people will you see, a people too deep in language to listen to, of a stammering tongue without your understanding. (**Isaiah 33:19**)
- And he continued saying to me; Son of man, go, enter in among the house of Israel, and you must speak with my words to them. (**Ezekiel 3:4**)
- For it is not to a people who are unintelligible in language or heavy of tongue that you are being sent, to the house of Israel. (**Ezekiel 3:5**)
- Not to numerous peoples unintelligible in language or heavy in tongue, whose words you cannot hear understandingly. If it was to them that I had sent you, those very ones would listen to you. (**Ezekiel 3:6**)
- We find, for example, that certain languages are **monosyllabic**, made up of words of only one syllable, such as Chinese. By contrast,

the vocabularies of a number of other languages are formed largely by **agglutination**, that is, by joining words placed side by side, as in the German word *Hausfriedensbruch*, which means literally, **house peace breakage**, or, in a form more understandable to the English-speaking mind, **trespass**.

- In some languages syntax, the order of the words in the sentence, is very important, in others it matters little. So, too, some languages have many conjugations, verb forms, others, such as Chinese, have none. Countless differences could be cited, each requiring an adjustment in mental patterns, often with great effort.
- Apparently the original **languages** resulting from divine action at Babel in course of time produced related dialects, and the dialects frequently developed into separate **languages**, their relationship to their **sister dialects** or to the **parent language** sometimes becoming almost indistinguishable.
- Even Shem's descendants, who apparently did not figure among the crowd at Babel, came to speak not only Hebrew but also Aramaean, Akkadian, and Arabic.
- Historically, various factors have contributed to the change in languages: separation due to distance or geographic barriers, wars and conquests, a breakdown in communications, and immigration by those of another language.
- Because of such factors ancient major languages have fragmented, certain tongues have partially merged with others, and some languages have disappeared completely and have been replaced by those of the invading conquerors.
- **Language** research provides evidence in harmony with the preceding information. *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* says: **The earliest records of written language, the only linguistic fossils man can hope to have, go back no more than about 4,000 or 5,000 years. [1985, Vol. 22, p. 567]**
- An article in *Science Illustrated* of July 1948 [p. 63] states: **Older forms of the languages known today were far more difficult than their modern descendants. Man appears not to have begun with a simple speech, and gradually made it more complex, but rather to have gotten hold of a tremendously knotty speech somewhere in the unrecorded past, and gradually simplified it to the modern forms.**

- Linguist **Dr. Mason** also points out that the idea that savages speak in a series of grunts, and are unable to express many civilized concepts, is very wrong, and that many of the **languages** of non-literate peoples are far more complex than modern European ones. [Science News Letter, September 3, 1955, p. 148]
- The evidence is thus against any evolutionary origin of speech or of ancient **languages**.
- Concerning the focal point from which the spreading of ancient languages began, **Sir Henry Rawlinson**, Oriental language scholar, observed: If we were to be thus guided by the mere intersection of linguistic paths, and independently of all reference to the scriptural record, we should still be led to fix on the plains of Shinar, as the focus from which the various lines had radiated. [The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, London, 1855, Vol. 15, p. 232]
- Among the major **language families** listed by modern philologists are; Indo-European, Sino-Tibetan, Afro-Asian, Japanese and Korean, Dravidian, Malayo-Polynesian, and Black African.
- There are many tongues that till now defy classification. Within each of the major families there are many subdivisions, or smaller families. Thus, the Indo-European family includes Germanic, Romance (Italic), Balto-Slavic, Indo-Iranian, Greek, Celtic, Albanian, and Armenian.
- Most of these smaller families, in turn, have several members. Romance languages, for example, embrace French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, and Romanian.

.. From Abraham Onward

- Abraham the Hebrew evidently had no difficulty in conversing with the Hamitic people of Canaan.
- After that the king of Sodom said to Abram; Give me the souls, but take the goods for yourself. (**Genesis 14:21**)
- At this Abram said to the king of Sodom; I do lift up my hand in an oath to Yehowah the Most High God, Producer of heaven and earth. (**Genesis 14:22**)
- That, from a thread to a sandal lace, no, I shall take nothing from

anything that is yours, in order, that you may not say; It was I who made Abram rich. ([Genesis 14:23](#))

- Nothing for me! Only what the young men have already eaten, and the share of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshcol and Mamre, let them take their share. ([Genesis 14:24](#))
- Now Abraham moved camp from there to the land of the Negeb and took up dwelling between Kadesh and Shur and residing as an alien at Gerar. ([Genesis 20:1](#))
- And Abraham repeated concerning Sarah his wife; She is my sister. With that Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah. ([Genesis 20:2](#))
- Afterward God came to Abimelech in a dream by night and said to him; Here you are as good as dead because of the woman whom you have taken, since she is owned by another owner as his wife. ([Genesis 20:3](#))
- However, Abimelech had not gone near her. Hence he said; Yehowah, will you kill a nation that is really righteous? ([Genesis 20:4](#))
- Did not he say to me; She is my sister? And she, did not she too say; He is my brother? In the honesty of my heart and with innocency of my hands I have done this. ([Genesis 20:5](#))
- T that the true God said to him in the dream; I too have known that in the honesty of your heart you have done this, and I was also holding you back from sinning against me. That is why I did not allow you to touch her. ([Genesis 20:6](#))
- But now return the man's wife, for he is a prophet, and he will make supplication for you. So keep living. But if you are not returning her, know that you will positively die, you and all who are yours. ([Genesis 20:7](#))
- So Abimelech got up early in the morning and proceeded to call all his servants and to speak of all these things in their ears. And the men got very much afraid. ([Genesis 20:8](#))
- Then Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, What have you done to us, and what sin have I committed against you, in that

you have brought upon me and my kingdom a great sin? Deeds that should not have been done you have done in connection with me. ([Genesis 20:9](#))

- **And Abimelech went on to say to Abraham; What did you have in view in that you have done this thing? ([Genesis 20:10](#))**
- **To this Abraham said; It was because I said to myself; Doubtless there is no fear of God in this place, and they will certainly kill me because of my wife. ([Genesis 20:11](#))**
- **And, besides, she is truly my sister, the daughter of my father, only not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife. ([Genesis 20:12](#))**
- **And it came about that, when God caused me to wander from the house of my father, then I said to her; This is your loving-kindness which you may exercise toward me. At every place where we shall come say of me; He is my brother. ([Genesis 20:13](#))**
- **Following that Abimelech took sheep and cattle and menservants and maidservants and gave them to Abraham and returned to him Sarah his wife. ([Genesis 20:14](#))**
- **Further Abimelech said; Here my land is available to you. Dwell where it is good in your eyes. ([Genesis 20:15](#))**
- **And to Sarah he said; Here I do give a thousand silver pieces of money to your brother. Here it is for you a covering of the eyes to all who are with you, and before everybody, and you are cleared of reproach. ([Genesis 20:16](#))**
- **Now it came about at that time that Abimelech together with Phicol the chief of his army said to Abraham. God is with you in everything you are doing. ([Genesis 21:22](#))**
- **So now swear to me here by God that you will not prove false to me and to my offspring and to my posterity, that, according to the loyal love with which I have dealt with you, you will deal with me and with the land in which you have been residing as an alien. ([Genesis 21:23](#))**
- **So Abraham said; I shall swear. ([Genesis 21:24](#))**

- **When Abraham criticized Abimelech severely as regards the well of water that the servants of Abimelech had seized by violence. (Genesis 21:25)**
- **Then Abimelech said; I do not know who did this thing, neither did you yourself tell it to me, and I myself have also not heard of it except today. (Genesis 21:26)**
- **With that Abraham took sheep and cattle and gave them to Abimelech, and both of them proceeded to conclude a covenant. (Genesis 21:27)**
- **When Abraham set seven female lambs of the flock by themselves. (Genesis 21:28)**
- **Abimelech went on to say to Abraham; What is the meaning here of these seven female lambs that you have set by themselves? (Genesis 21:29)**
- **Then he said; You are to accept the seven female lambs at my hand, that it may serve as a witness for me that I have dug this well. (Genesis 21:30)**
- **That is why he called that place Beersheba, because there both of them had taken an oath. (Genesis 21:31)**
- **So they concluded a covenant at Beersheba, after which Abimelech got up together with Phicol the chief of his army and they returned to the land of the Philistines. (Genesis 21:32)**
- **After that he planted a tamarisk tree at Beersheba and called there upon the name of Yehowah the indefinitely lasting God. (Genesis 21:33)**
- **And Abraham extended his residence as an alien in the land of the Philistines many days. (Genesis 21:34)**
- **No use of interpreters is mentioned, but then, neither is such use mentioned when Abraham went to Egypt.**
- **So it happened that, as soon as Abram entered Egypt, the Egyptians got to see the woman, that she was very beautiful. (Genesis 12:14)**

- And the princes of Pharaoh also got to see her and they began praising her to Pharaoh, so that the woman was taken to the house of Pharaoh. (**Genesis 12:15**)
- And he treated Abram well on her account, and he came to have sheep and cattle and asses and menservants and maidservants and she-asses and camels. (**Genesis 12:16**)
- Then Yehowah touched Pharaoh and his household with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. (**Genesis 12:17**)
- With that Pharaoh called Abram and said; What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? (**Genesis 12:18**)
- Why did you say; She is my sister, so that I was about to take her as my wife? And now here is your wife. Take her and go! (**Genesis 12:19**)
- He probably knew Akkadian or Assyro-Babylonian, because of having lived in Ur of the Chaldeans.
- After that Terah took Abram his son and Lot, the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, the wife of Abram his son, and they went with him out of Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan. In time they came to Haran and took up dwelling there. (**Genesis 11:31**)
- Akkadian for a time was an international language. It is possible that the people of Canaan, living in relative proximity to the Semitic peoples of Syria and Arabia, were to a degree bilingual.
- Then, too, the alphabet gives clear evidence of its being of Semitic origin, and this could also have exercised considerable influence toward the use of Semitic tongues by persons of other language groups, particularly rulers and officials.

See Also CANAAN, CANAANITE NO. 2 (Language)
See Also WRITING.

- Jacob also apparently communicated easily with his Aramaean relatives.

- **After that Jacob set his feet in motion and traveled on to the land of the Orientals. (Genesis 29:1)**
- **Now he looked, and here there was a well in the field and here three droves of sheep were lying down there by it, because from that well they were accustomed to water the droves, and there was a great stone over the mouth of the well. (Genesis 29:2)**
- **When all the droves had been gathered there, they rolled away the stone from off the mouth of the well, and they watered the flocks, after which they returned the stone over the mouth of the well to its place. (Genesis 29:3)**
- **So Jacob said to them; My brothers, from what place are you? To which they said; We are from Haran. (Genesis 29:4)**
- **Then he said to them; Do you know Laban the grandson of Nahor? To which they said; We know him. (Genesis 29:5)**
- **At this he said to them; Is it all right with him? In turn they said; It is all right. And here is Rachel his daughter coming with the sheep! (Genesis 29:6)**
- **And he went on to say; Why, it is yet full day. It is not the time for gathering the herds. Water the sheep, then go feed them. (Genesis 29:7)**
- **To this they said; We are not allowed to do so until all the droves are gathered and they actually roll away the stone from off the mouth of the well. Then we must water the sheep. (Genesis 29:8)**
- **While he was yet speaking with them, Rachel came with the sheep that belonged to her father, for she was a shepherdess. (Genesis 29:9)**
- **And it came about that when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, Jacob immediately approached and rolled away the stone from off the mouth of the well and watered the sheep of Laban his mother's brother. (Genesis 29:10)**
- **Then Jacob kissed Rachel and raised his voice and burst into tears. (Genesis 29:11)**

- **And Jacob began to tell Rachel that he was the brother of her father and that he was the son of Rebekah. And she went running and telling her father. ([Genesis 29:12](#))**
- **Now it came about that as soon as Laban heard the report about Jacob the son of his sister, he went running to meet him. Then he embraced him and kissed him and brought him on into his house. And he began to relate to Laban all these things. ([Genesis 29:13](#))**
- **After that Laban said to him; You are indeed my bone and my flesh. So he dwelt with him a full month. ([Genesis 29:14](#))**
- **Though their terminology differed on occasion.**
- **Then Jacob said to his brothers; Pick up stones! And they went taking stones and making a heap. After that they ate there on the heap. ([Genesis 31:46](#))**
- **And Laban began calling it Jegarsahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed. ([Genesis 31:47](#))**
- **Joseph, who likely learned Egyptian while a slave of Potiphar, employed an interpreter when first talking with his Hebrew brothers upon their arrival in Egypt.**
- **As for Joseph, he was brought down to Egypt, and Potiphar, a court official of Pharaoh, the chief of the bodyguard, an Egyptian, got to buy him from the hand of the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there. ([Genesis 39:1](#))**
- **And Joseph was the man in power over the land. He was the one that did the selling to all people of the earth. Consequently Joseph's brothers came and bowed low to him with their faces to the earth. ([Genesis 42:6](#))**
- **As for them, they did not know that Joseph was listening, because there was an interpreter between them. ([Genesis 42:23](#))**
- **Moses, raised in Pharaoh's courts, doubtless knew several languages, Hebrew, Egyptian, probably Akkadian, and perhaps others.**
- **And the child grew up. Then she brought him to Pharaoh's**

- daughter, so that he became a son to her, and she proceeded to call his name Moses and to say; It is because I have drawn him out of the water. (**Exodus 2:10**)
- Later Moses caused Israel to depart from the Red Sea and they went out to the wilderness of Shur and marched on for three days in the wilderness, but they did not find water. (**Exodus 15:22**)
 - Aramaic in time replaced Akkadian as the lingua franca, or international language, being used even in correspondence with Egypt. However, by the time of Assyrian King Sennacherib's attack on Judah **732 B.C.E**, Aramaic, ancient Syrian, was not understood by the majority of Jews, though Judean officials understood it.
 - At this Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah and Shebnah and Joah said to Rabshakeh; Speak with your servants, please, in the Syrian language, for we can listen, and do not speak with us in the Jews language in the ears of the people that are on the wall. (**2 Kings 18:26**)
 - But Rabshakeh said to them; Is it to your lord and to you that my lord has sent me to speak these words? Is it not to the men sitting upon the wall, that they may eat their own excrement and drink their own urine with you men? (**2 Kings 18:27**)
 - So, too, the Chaldean language of the Semitic Babylonians, who finally conquered Jerusalem in **607 B.C.E**, sounded like those stammering with their lips to the Jews.
 - For by those stammering with their lips and by a different tongue he will speak to this people. (**Isaiah 28:11**)
 - Children in whom there was no defect at all, but good in appearance and having insight into all wisdom and being acquainted with knowledge, and having discernment of what is known, in whom also there was ability to stand in the palace of the king, and to teach them the writing and the tongue of the Chaldeans. (**Daniel 1:4**)
 - Yehowah will raise up against you a nation far away, from the end of the earth, just as an eagle pounces, a nation whose tongue you will not understand. (**Deuteronomy 28:49**)

- **Although Babylon, Persia, and other world powers carved out huge empires and brought under their control people of many languages, they did not eliminate the divisive barrier of language differences.**
- **And the herald was crying out loudly; To you it is being said; O peoples, national groups and languages. ([Daniel 3:4](#))**
- **Because of this, at the same time as all the peoples were hearing the sound of the horn, the pipe, the zither, the triangular harp, the stringed instrument and all sorts of musical instruments, all the peoples, national groups and languages were falling down and worshipping the image of gold that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. ([Daniel 3:7](#))**
- **So he sent written documents to all the kings jurisdictional districts, to each jurisdictional district in its own style of writing and to each people in its own tongue, for every husband to be continually acting as prince in his own house and speaking in the tongue of his own people. ([Esther 1:22](#))**
- **Nehemiah showed great concern upon learning that the sons of mixed marriages among the returned Jews did not know Jewish, Hebrew.**
- **Also, in those days I saw the Jews that had given a dwelling to Ashdodite, Ammonite and Moabite wives. ([Nehemiah 13:23](#))**
- **And as for their sons, half were speaking Ashdodite, and there were none of them knowing how to speak Jewish, but in the tongue of the different peoples. ([Nehemiah 13:24](#))**
- **And I began to find fault with them and call down evil upon them and strike some men of them and pull out their hair and make them swear by God; You should not give your daughters to their sons, and you should not accept any of their daughters for your sons or yourselves. ([Nehemiah 13:25](#))**
- **His concern was for pure worship, as he recognized the importance of understanding the Sacred Scriptures, till then available only in Hebrew, when these were read and discussed.**
- **Was it not because of these that Solomon the king of Israel sinned? And among the many nations there proved to be no king**

like him, and loved of his God he happened to be, so that God constituted him king over all Israel. Even him the foreign wives caused to sin. (**Nehemiah 13:26**)

- And is it not something unheard of for you to commit all this great badness in acting unfaithfully against our God by giving a dwelling to foreign wives? (**Nehemiah 13:27**)
- And all the people proceeded to gather themselves as one man at the public square that was before the Water Gate. Then they said to Ezra the copyist to bring the book of the Law of Moses, which Yehowah had commanded Israel. (**Nehemiah 8:1**)
- Accordingly Ezra the priest brought the Law before the congregation of men as well as of women and of all intelligent enough to listen, on the first day of the seventh month. (**Nehemiah 8:2**)
- And he continued to read aloud from it before the public square that is before the Water Gate, from daybreak till midday, in front of the men and the women and the other intelligent ones, and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the Law. (**Nehemiah 8:3**)
- And they continued reading aloud from the book, from the Law of the true God, it being expounded, and there being a putting of meaning into it, and they continued giving understanding in the reading. (**Nehemiah 8:8**)
- And Nehemiah, that is, the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest, the copyist, and the Levites who were instructing the people proceeded to say to all the people; This very day is holy to Yehowah your God. Do not mourn or weep. For all the people were weeping as they were hearing the words of the Law. (**Nehemiah 8:9**)
- Oneness of **language** in itself would also be a unifying force among the people. The Hebrew Scriptures doubtless were a major factor in the stability of the Hebrew **language**. During the thousand-year period of their being written, virtually no change in **language** is noted.
- When Jesus was on earth, Palestine had become, to a considerable extent, a polyglot, or multilingual, region. There is solid

evidence that the Jews still retained their use of Hebrew, but Aramaic and Koine were also spoken. Latin, too, appeared on official inscriptions of the Roman rulers of the land.

- Therefore many of the Jews read this title, because the place where Jesus was impaled was near the city, and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, in Greek. ([John 19:20](#))
- And was doubtless heard from Roman soldiers stationed there. As to the language generally spoken by Jesus,

See Also ARAMAIC

See Also HEBREW 2

- On the day of Pentecost, **33 C.E.**, the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Christian disciples in Jerusalem, and they suddenly began speaking in many **languages** that they had never studied and learned. Yehowah God had demonstrated at Babel his miraculous ability to place different vocabularies and different grammars in the minds of people.
- At Pentecost he did so again but with a major difference, for the Christians suddenly gifted with the power to speak new **languages** did not forget their original tongue, **Hebrew**.
- God's spirit here was also effecting a very different purpose, not of confusing and scattering but of enlightening and drawing together persons of honest heart into Christian unity.
- Now while the day of the festival of Pentecost was in progress they were all together at the same place. ([Acts of Apostles 2:1](#))
- And suddenly there occurred from heaven a noise just like that of a rushing stiff breeze, and it filled the whole house in which they were sitting. ([Acts of Apostles 2:2](#))
- And tongues as if of fire became visible to them and were distributed about, and one sat upon each one of them. ([Acts of Apostles 2:3](#))
- And they all became filled with Holy Spirit and started to speak with different tongues, just as the spirit was granting them to make utterance. ([Acts of Apostles 2:4](#))

- As it was, there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, reverent men, from every nation of those under heaven. ([Acts of Apostles 2:5](#))
- So, when this sound occurred, the multitude came together and were bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. ([Acts of Apostles 2:6](#))
- Indeed, they were astonished and began to wonder and say; See here, all these who are speaking are Galileans, are they not? ([Acts of Apostles 2:7](#))
- And yet how is it we are hearing, each one of us, his own language in which we were born? ([Acts of Apostles 2:8](#))
- Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the inhabitants of Mesopotamia, and Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and the district of Asia. ([Acts of Apostles 2:9](#))
- And Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya, which is toward Cyrene, and sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes. ([Acts of Apostles 2:10](#))
- Cretans and Arabians, we hear them speaking in our tongues about the magnificent things of God. ([Acts of Apostles 2:11](#))
- Yes, they were all astonished and were in perplexity, saying one to another; What does this thing purport to be? ([Acts of Apostles 2:12](#))
- However, different ones mocked at them and began to say; They are full of sweet wine. ([Acts of Apostles 2:13](#))
- But Peter stood up with the eleven and raised his voice and made this utterance to them; Men of Judea and all you inhabitants of Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give ear to my sayings. ([Acts of Apostles 2:14](#))
- These people are, in fact, not drunk, as you suppose, for it is the third hour of the day. ([Acts of Apostles 2:15](#))
- On the contrary, this is what was said through the prophet Joel. ([Acts of Apostles 2:16](#))
- And in the last days, God says, I shall pour out some of my spirit

upon every sort of flesh, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy and your young men will see visions and your old men will dream dreams. ([Acts of Apostles 2:17](#))

- And even upon my men slaves and upon my women slaves I will pour out some of my spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. ([Acts of Apostles 2:18](#))
- And I will give portents in heaven above and signs on earth below, blood and fire and smoke mist. ([Acts of Apostles 2:19](#))
- The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and illustrious day of Yehowah arrives. ([Acts of Apostles 2:20](#))
- And everyone who calls on the name of Yehowah will be saved. ([Acts of Apostles 2:21](#))
- Now when they heard this they were stabbed to the heart, and they said to Peter and the rest of the apostles; Men, brothers, what shall we do? ([Acts of Apostles 2:37](#))
- Peter said to them; Repent, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the free gift of the Holy Spirit. ([Acts of Apostles 2:38](#))
- For the promise is to you and to your children and to all those afar off, just as many as Yehowah our God may call to him. ([Acts of Apostles 2:39](#))
- And with many other words he bore thorough witness and kept exhorting them, saying; Get saved from this crooked generation. ([Acts of Apostles 2:40](#))
- Therefore those who embraced his word heartily were baptized, and on that day about three thousand souls were added. ([Acts of Apostles 2:41](#))
- And they continued devoting themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to sharing with one another, to taking of meals and to prayers. ([Acts of Apostles 2:42](#))
- From then on God's covenant people were a multilingual people, but the barrier created by **language** difference was overcome because

their minds were filled with the common or mutual **language** of the truth. In unity they spoke in praise of Yehowah and his righteous purposes by Christ Jesus.

- **Thus, the promise at;**
- **For then I shall give to peoples the change to a pure language, in order for them all to call upon the name of Yehowah, in order to serve him shoulder to shoulder. ([Zephaniah 3:9](#))**
- **Saw a fulfillment as Yehowah God gave peoples the change to a pure **language**, in order for them all to call upon the name of Yehowah, in order to serve him shoulder to shoulder.**
- **And as regards their works and their thoughts, I am coming in order to collect all the nations and tongues together, and they will have to come and see my glory. ([Isaiah 66:18](#))**
- **This is what Yehowah of armies has said; It will be in those days that ten men out of all the languages of the nations will take hold, yes, they will actually take hold of the skirt of a man who is a Jew, saying,**
- **This is what Yehowah of armies has said; It will be in those days that ten men out of all the languages of the nations will take hold, yes, they will actually take hold of the skirt of a man who is a Jew, saying; We will go with you people, for we have heard that God is with you people. ([Zechariah 8:23](#))**
- **And I heard the number of those who were sealed, a hundred and forty-four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the sons of Israel. ([Revelation 7:4](#))**
- **After these things I saw, and, look! A great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, dressed in white robes, and there were palm branches in their hands. ([Revelation 7:9](#))**
- **And they keep on crying with a loud voice, saying; Salvation we owe to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb. ([Revelation 7:10](#))**
- **For this to be so, they should all speak in agreement and be fitly united in the same mind and in the same line of thought.**

- **Now I exhort you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you should all speak in agreement, and that there should not be divisions among you, but that you may be fitly united in the same mind and in the same line of thought. (1 Corinthians 1:10)**
- **The purity of the language spoken by the Christian congregation was also because of its being free from words expressing malicious bitterness, anger, wrath, screaming, and similar abusive language, as well as being free from deceit, obscenity, and corruptness.**
- **Let a rotten saying not proceed out of your mouth, but whatever saying is good for building up as the need may be, that it may impart what is favorable to the hearers. (Ephesians 4:29)**
- **Let all malicious bitterness and anger and wrath and screaming and abusive speech be taken away from you along with all badness. (Ephesians 4:31)**
- **For, he that would love life and see good days, let him restrain his tongue from what is bad and his lips from speaking deception. (1 Peter 3:10)**
- **Christians were to put **language** to its most exalted use, praising their Creator and upbuilding their neighbor with wholesome, truthful speech, especially the Good News about God's Kingdom.**
- **And this Good News of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. (Matthew 24:14)**
- **In all things showing yourself an example of fine works, showing uncorruptness in your teaching, seriousness. (Titus 2:7)**
- **Wholesome speech which cannot be condemned, so that the man on the opposing side may get ashamed, having nothing vile to say about us. (Titus 2:8)**
- **Through him let us always offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips which make public declaration to his name. (Hebrews 13:15)**
- **O Yehowah, may you open these lips of mine, that my own**

mouth may tell forth your praise. (**Psalms 51:15**)

- I shall laud Yehowah very much with my mouth, and in among many people I shall praise him. (**Psalms 109:30**)
- As the time neared for God to execute his judicial decision upon all the nations of the world, Yehowah would enable many more to speak that pure **language**.
- The Bible began to be written in the **Hebrew** language, and some portions were later recorded in **Aramaic**. Then, in the **First Century** of the **Common Era**, the remainder of the Sacred Scriptures were written in **Koine**, or common **Greek**, though Matthew wrote his Gospel first in **Hebrew**.
- By then a translation had also been made of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. Called the **Septuagint**, it was not an inspired translation but, nevertheless, was used by the Christian writers of the Bible in numerous quotations.
- So, too, the **Christian Greek Scriptures** and eventually the whole Bible came to be translated into other **languages**, among the earliest being Latin, Syriac, Ethiopic, Arabic, and Persian. As of the present time, the Bible, the whole or in part, is available in upwards of 1,800 languages.
- This has facilitated the proclamation of the Good News and thus has contributed to overcoming the barrier of **language** divisions for the purpose of uniting people of many lands in pure worship of their Creator.

See Also INSPIRATION