

Bible Basics for the Orthodox Christian

Key Terms and Examples

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, Ann Arbor, MI

February 27, 2016

1. Aramaic in the Bible

Genesis 31:47

Jeremiah 10:11

Daniel 2:46-7:28

Ezra 4:8-6:18; 7:12-26

Mark 5:41 “*Talitha, qumi!*” (Little girl, arise!)

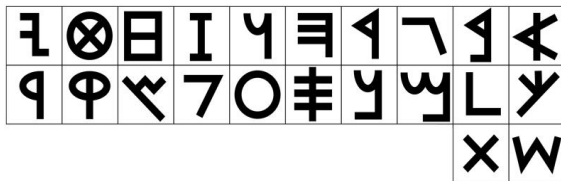
Mark 15:34 “*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*” (My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?—cf. Matthew 27:46)

Galatians 4:6 “*Abba!*” (Father!)

1 Corinthians 16:22 “*Marana-tha!*” (Our Lord, come!)

Matthew 7:6— Give not holy things (*qadishin*)/rings (*qadashin*) unto dogs and cast not your pearls before swine ...

2. The (Proto-/Paleo-)Hebrew Alphabet vs. the Aramaic Alphabet



ט	ח	ז	ו	ה	ד	ג	ב	א
Tet (T)	Chet (Ch)	Zayin (Z)	Vav (V/O/U)	He (H)	Dalet (D)	Gimel (G)	Bet (B/V)	Alef (Silent)
ס	נ	נ	מ	מ	ל	ך	כ	י
Samech (S)	Nun (N)	Nun (N)	Mem (M)	Mem (M)	Lamed (L)	Khaf (Kh)	Kaf (K/Kh)	Yod (Y)
ת	ש	ר	ק	ץ	צ	ף	פ	ע
Tav (T/S)	Shin (Sh/S)	Resh (R)	Qof (Q)	Tzade (Tz)	Tzade (Tz)	Fe (F)	Pe (P/F)	Ayin (Silent)

Wikipedia, “Paleo-Hebrew Alphabet”

Orbis Latinus (orbilat.com)

3. **Canon** = measuring-stick > standard, norm > official set of books
(*kanona piteos*)

Testament = covenant, binding agreement with promises and conditions
(blessings & curses) and a sign (as evidence of the contract)

4. Covenants of the Bible and their signs

Noah	Genesis 9	Rainbow
Abraham	Genesis 15, 17	Circumcision
Moses	Exodus, Deuteronomy	Passover observance
David	2 Samuel 7	Heir on throne + Temple
New Covenant	Jeremiah 31:33	Indwelling Holy Spirit and Holy Gifts of Communion

5. **Tanakh** = *Torah* + *Nevi'im* + *Ketuvim*
Law/teaching Prophets Writings

Luke 24:44—“He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.”

6. **Septuagint** (abbreviated LXX), Translation of the so-called 70/72 scholars of Alexandria under King Ptolemy II in the 3rd century BC. (Cf. septuagenarian, a person in his/her seventies)

Masoretic Text (MT), compiled by the Masoretes, Jewish scholars of the 7th-11th centuries AD.

Psalm 22:16: “Dogs are round about me; a company of evildoers encircle me; they have pierced my hands and feet/like a lion, my hands and feet”

ca'aru “they dug, they made a hole in, they pierced” versus *ca'ari* “like a lion”

7. From the *Philocalia* of St. Basil and St. Gregory (emphasis added)

Scripture interweaves the imaginative with the historical, sometimes introducing what is utterly impossible, sometimes what is possible but never occurred. Sometimes it is only a few words, not literally true, which have been inserted; sometimes the insertions are of greater length. And we must this way understand even the giving of the Law, for therein we may frequently discover the immediate use, **adapted to the times when the Law was given**; sometimes, however, no good reason appears. And elsewhere we have even impossible commands, for readers of greater ability and those who have more of the spirit of inquiry; so that, applying themselves to the labor of investigating the things written, they may have a fitting conviction of the necessity of looking therein for a meaning worthy of God. And not only did the Spirit thus deal with the Scriptures before the coming of Christ, but, inasmuch as He is the same Spirit, and proceeds from the One God, He has done the same with **the Gospels and the writings of the Apostles; for not even they are purely historical**, incidents which never occurred being interwoven in the "corporeal" sense; nor in the Law and the Commandments does the Spirit make the reasonableness altogether clear.

8. The Perspicuity of Scripture?

ΤΙΣΣΤΡΑΤΕΥΤΑΙΤΟΙΣΙΔΙΟΙΣΟΨΩΝΟΙΣΠΟΤΕ

‘DBT’F’NY’FY’RSR’FTHDNTTVFRC’FTHSSNTNCTWTMYSSSTR
HS’THNGFRTHRPSTS

2 Peter 1:20 “First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation ...

2 Peter 3:16 ... “there are some thing in [St. Paul’s letters] hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.”