

THE OLD TESTAMENT

The vast majority of the Old Testament is written in the Hebrew language. (A very small portion is written in Aramaic, which is closely related to Hebrew.) Besides the unusual letters, a distinctive characteristic of Hebrew is that it reads from the right to left. To find the book of Genesis, you need to look in what seems to be the back of the Hebrew Bible!

Psalm 23:1-3

א מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד: יְהוָה רֹעִי, לֹא אֶחְסָר.

ב בְּנֵאוֹת דְּשָׂא, יִרְבִּיצֵנִי; עַל-מִי מְנַחֹת יִנְהַלֵּנִי.

ג נַפְשִׁי יִשׁוּבֶב; יִנְחֵנִי בְּמַעְגְלֵי-צֶדֶק, לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ.

Translation:

1 A psalm of David.

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,

3 he restores my soul.

He guides me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.

THE NEW TESTAMENT

The entire New Testament is written in Greek. It was the common language of the Roman Empire. Therefore the advantage of writing in Greek was that it was widely understood.

John 3:16

Οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον, ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν, ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόληται ἀλλ' ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

Translation:

16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.