



The Hebrew Language Contrasted to the Greek

The Hebrew language is simple and natural. This is common in the Semitic languages. Hebrew presents more the childhood of the human race. The basic characteristics of childhood are perception, contemplation and observation. God has welded into the two languages of Scripture the best verbal and literary expression of perception, contemplation, observation, conception, reflection, and reasoning.

The six factors within the languages of Scripture are:

Perception: This is the awareness of objects, consciousness. A direct acquaintance with anything through the senses of hearing, seeing, feeling, smelling, and tasting.

Contemplation: This is considering the attention, concentration, intention and expectation.

Observation: This is taking special notice or giving special attention.

Conception: This is the power of the mind to form ideas, or schemes, or designs as for works of art.

Reflection: A conclusion reached after much thought. It has the idea of mental consideration arriving at a conclusion.

Reasoning: This is the drawing of inferences, thinking through a view to a conclusion believed to be valid, the proofs or arguments resulting from the use of reason.

In Hebrew, there is a striking correspondence of the language to the thought. The Hebrew is not interested basically in the form or artistic expression, but rather in the idea, the thought, and emotion flowing forth. This is seen in the system of stems for example. In Hebrew poetry, there is an absence of strictness of artistic form. This could be given by the saying, "Free as the ocean is the poet's emotion."

The Hebrew has a majesty and sublimity. This is based largely on the nature of its contents; God, the Holy Redeemer, God's people, and God who enters into a sympathetic relation with His creatures. The Hebrews were as realistic as the Greeks were idealistic. The Hebrews looked at heroes as men of like passions with their experiences as the keys to joy and sorrow of life. For the Hebrew, there is no such thing as science.

Hebrew has a richness in synonyms. The Hebrew as compared to English has ten times as many roots and ten times fewer words than English. Hebrew as compared to Greek has 2,000 roots and 10,000 words whereas Greek has 1,800 roots and 100,000 words.

The Hebrew language is not as extensive as Greek. It is more limited as it covers history, poetry, fiction, oratory, and ethical wisdom. Greek has many more facets and is far more extensive. The Hebrew language is remarkable for its life and fervor. This is due to the emotional and hearty character of the Hebrew people. You live with them, feel with them, suffer with them, laugh with them.

Hebrew is said to be as transparent as glass revealing to us the very soul of the people. In the Hebrew, the emotions overpower the thoughts and carry them on in a rushing stream to the expression. Hebrew is said to be as expressive of emotion as the face of a modest child. Four fifths of the Bible is recorded in the Hebrew language. The Hebrew language is really the language of religion and molded by religious and moral ideas and emotions.