



The Bible, Testimony of Ancient Versions

Syriac Versions

There are five main Syriac Versions - Tatian's Diatessaron, Old Syriac, The Peshitta, The Philozenian, and The Palestinian.

Tatian's Diatessaron: 170 AD. Language – Syriac. Character - A Harmony of the Gospels, interwoven together. Tatian was Syriac, but the name of the version is Greek.

The Old Syriac: Curetonian Syriac. Contents - large portions of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Date - 5th century. Published in 1858.

Siniatic Syriac: Date - 4th century, Contents - parts of the four Gospels. Published in 1894. Value: they have some differences with Greek manuscripts, but also contain agreements.

Peshitta Version (Syriac Vulgate or Authorized Text): Used for about 1500 years. Date - 150 AD. Contents - all of the New Testament but 2 Peter; 2 & 3 John; Jude and Revelation. Possible origin - Rabbula of Edessa, 411-435, translated Greek New Testament into Syriac, possibly this is the translation.

Philozenian Syriac: Philozenian. Translated by Philozenian in 508 AD. Omits 2 Peter; 2 & 3 John; Jude and Revelation. Translated from pure Greek manuscripts.

Harklean Syriac: Version of former Philozenian translation, Preserves the Greek idioms, put them into Syriac. Has marginal readings from Greek and Syriac manuscripts. One of the great manuscripts which testify to the Greek text.

Palestinian Syriac: Series of lectionaries of the Gospels and other parts of New Testament. Language in Syriac. Date - 6th century.

Latin Versions

There are Old Latin, Itala, and Latin Vulgate versions.

Old Latin Version: Its value, Mostly from its age, 150 AD. Oldest translation of the whole Bible known. It is a good translation from the Greek. There are about 46 complete manuscripts extant on this. Omissions – 2 Peter.

Itala Version: Date - 4th century, Latin was displacing Greek in Italy and Western Europe. Did not differ greatly from Old Latin.

Latin Vulgate Version: Meaning of Vulgate: Common or Current. At the Council of Trent: 1545-63, this was given to Jerome's translation as the Standard Authoritative Bible of the Latin or Roman Church. This is basically the current meaning today. Date - 383-405 AD. Latin Version of the Whole Bible. Later included the Apocrypha. The Old Latin Gospels are revised from the original Greek. Value: It is more or less faulty as to accuracy. Its greatest value lies in its age and preservation of Christianity. Helped to settle the text of Scripture. The New Testament portion ranks with the great 4th century manuscripts.