

greatness of God and how they are to stand for him in the language into which they are to be taken into exile. Then he says, Thus shall ye say unto them: The gods whom you worship have not made the heaven and earth, but the true God has done it. Something like that -- I forget the exact words.

But he gives them a sentence in Aramaic to say to the people among the people with whom they are to be in exile.

Question (indistinct)

Answer: It's the other way around. The Heb. uses Aramaic letters, but they are the same letters. Our Heb. Bible which is written in Aramaic letters you can't recognize the Aramaic at a glance. But when you look at a word, instead of saying ha-erets you have erta. The article is put at the end instead of at the beginning. One of the consonants is different, but most of the consonants are very similar. Aramaic is very close to Heb. in many ways.

In Jer. 10:11; Dan. 2:4-7:28; Ezra 4:8-6:18; 7:12-26 -- these are the four passages in the OT in Aramaic. The rest of the OT is in Heb.

Aramaic is evidently a very old language. We find two words in Aramaic in Genesis. We read that Jacob and Laban -- when Laban pursued Jacob in order to bet back his household ~~gods~~ gods, and was unable to find them in Jacob's property -- they put up a bounday mark that neither of them should pass over in order to injure the other. Then ~~x~~ each of them looking in great distrust at the other and hoping the other would not injure him in any way, they prayed that beautiful Mispah benediction - May the Lord watch between me and thee while we are absent one from the other, that we don't cross over this boundary and hurt one another. They didn't say that (all) but that's what was in their minds (in the last part, of course.)

So they put up their boundaries and we read in Genesis that one of them called it yegar shadadutha. The other called it galah ate. In that case the words are utterly different. Many Aramaic words are very similar to Hebrew, but ~~xx~~ here we have the Heb. words "stones of ~~x~~ witness" ==galah eth. And we have the Aramaic yegar shadadutha which means the same thing. So Laban was Aramaic speaking. This is pretty good evidence of how far back Aramaic goes, back as far as the time of Jacob we have the people in the region from which Isaac got his wife. The region where Abraham lived for a time with his father before he came into Palestine, we have them there speaking Aramaic at that time.

Question: Did Jacob understand it?

Answer: Definitely. He lived up there c. 40 yrs. He must have talked it fluently. His mother was raised up there so he probably spoke Aramaic before he spoke Hebrew.

Question: (indistinct)

Answer: No. The two languages developed -- Babylonian, Aramaic, and Hebrew, Arabic, and Ethiopian -- they are all developed from original Semitic we have no trace of.