

# NT Study of “Lord” Glossary

**Aramaic:** is an ancient language spoken in the Middle East. The name of the language is based on the name of Aram, an ancient region in central Syria. Aramaic belongs to the Semitic family of languages. Aramaic script was widely adopted for other languages and is ancestral to Syriac and to both the Arabic and Modern Hebrew alphabets. An ancient form of Aramaic was the language of the Assyrian and Babylonian Empires.

**Codex** (Codices): is a manuscript in a “book” format, typically bound together and given a cover. The spread of the codex style is associated with the rise of Christianity and seems to have been adopted early on due its convenience over “scrolls.”

**Codex Sinaiticus** (4<sup>th</sup> Century): is a Greek uncial manuscript containing both Old and New Testaments. It was discovered in a Greek Orthodox Monastery in Mount Sinai and is represented by scholars with “**Ⲱ**.”

**Codex Vaticanus** (4<sup>th</sup> Century): is one of the oldest extant Greek uncial manuscripts containing both the Old and New Testaments. The manuscript is stored in the Vatican library and is represented by scholars with “B.”

**Coptic Translations:** are early manuscripts written in the Egyptian Language.

The **Dead Sea Scrolls:** are a collection of 972 texts from the Hebrew Bible and extra-biblical documents found between 1947 and 1956 on the northwest shore of the Dead Sea, from which they derive their name. They were specifically located at *Khirbet Qumran* in the British Mandate for Palestine, in what is now named the West Bank.

The texts are of great religious and historical significance, as they include the oldest known surviving copies of biblical and extra-biblical documents and preserve evidence of great diversity in late Second Temple Judaism. They are written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, mostly on parchment, but with some written on papyrus. These manuscripts generally date between 150 BCE and 70 CE. The scrolls are traditionally identified with the ancient Jewish sect called the Essenes, though some recent interpretations have challenged this association and argue that the scrolls were penned by priests in Jerusalem, Zadokites, or other unknown Jewish groups.

**Essenes:** were a Jewish sect that flourished from the 2nd century BCE to the 1st century CE which some scholars claim seceded from the Zadokite priests. Being much fewer in number than the Pharisees and the Sadducees (the other two major sects at the time), the Essenes lived in various cities but congregated in communal life dedicated to asceticism, voluntary poverty, daily immersion, and abstinence from worldly pleasures, including (for some groups) marriage. Many separate but related religious groups of that era shared similar mystic, eschatological, messianic, and ascetic beliefs. These

groups are collectively referred to by various scholars as the "Essenes." Josephus records that Essenes existed in large numbers and thousands lived throughout Roman Judæa.

The Essenes have gained fame in modern times as a result of the discovery of an extensive group of religious documents known as the Dead Sea Scrolls, which are commonly believed to be Essenes' library—although there is no proof that the Essenes wrote them. These documents include preserved multiple copies of the Hebrew Bible untouched from as early as 300 BCE until their discovery in 1946. Some scholars, however, dispute the notion that the Essenes wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls.

**Estrangelā Aramaic:** of the three major variants of the Syriac alphabet, the oldest and classical form of the alphabet is in the Estrangelā script. This was the script used in the translation of the Peshitta, both Old and New Testaments.

**Extant:** means something is still in existence; surviving.

The **Masoretic Text (MT)**: is the authoritative Hebrew text of the Jewish Bible regarded as Judaism's official version of the Tanakh. While the Masoretic Text defines the books of the Jewish canon, it also defines the precise letter-text of these biblical books, with their vocalization and accentuation known as the Masorah. The MT is also widely used as the basis for translations of the Old Testament in Protestant Bibles, and in recent years (since 1943) also for some Catholic Bibles, although the Eastern Orthodox continue to use the Septuagint as they hold it to be divinely inspired. In modern times, the Dead Sea Scrolls have shown the MT to be nearly identical to some texts of the Tanakh dating from 200 BCE but different from others.

The MT was primarily copied, edited, and distributed by a group of Jews known as the Masoretes between the 7th and 10th centuries CE. Though the consonants differ little from the text generally accepted in the early 2nd century (and also differ little from some Qumran texts that are even older), it has numerous differences of both greater and lesser significance when compared to (extant 4th century) manuscripts of the Septuagint.

**Nomina Sacra:** means "sacred names" in Latin and refers to the traditions of abbreviating frequently occurring sacred titles in early Greek manuscripts. These contractions are indicated with over lines above two or sometimes three Greek letters. These are found in all early Greek manuscripts from the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Century. The words God, Jesus, Christ, and Lord are some of the words designated with this feature. For instance Lord or kuriou in the Greek would be KU.

**Palaeography** also spelled **paleography** (from Greek *παλαιός* *palaiós* - "old" and *γράφειν* *graphein* - "to write"): is the study of ancient writing. Included in the discipline are the practice of deciphering, reading, and dating historical manuscripts and the cultural context of writing, including the methods with which writing and books were produced and the history of scriptoria.

**Papyrus** (Papyri): is a thick paper-like material produced from the pith of the papyrus plant. This word for the material also is used to designate documents which are written on it. Early manuscripts are given a number. Scholars have developed a system that identifies each old extant Greek papyri manuscript with an associated number. For example,  $\text{P}^{46}$  is the symbol for Papyrus manuscript number 46.

**Peshitta:** is a Syriac version of the Bible, which became the accepted Bible of the Syrian Christian churches from the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D. The word "Peshitta" is a Syriac word meaning simple, common, or straight. The name Peshitta was first employed by Moses bar Kepha in the 9th century to suggest (as does the name of the Latin Vulgate) that the text was in common use.

**Qumran** (küm-rän): is an archaeological site in the West Bank. It is located on a dry plateau about a mile inland from the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea, near the Israeli settlement and kibbutz of Kalia. The Hellenistic period settlement was constructed during the reign of John Hyrcanus, 134-104 BCE or somewhat later, and was occupied most of the time until it was destroyed by the Romans in 68 CE or shortly after. It is best known as the settlement nearest to the caves in which the Dead Sea Scrolls were hidden.

**Septuagint** (LXX): Hebrew was the original language of the Old Testament. During the reign and by the order of Ptolemy (Ptä-lä-mē) II Philadelphus, king of Egypt, the Old Testament was translated into Greek.

**Syriac:** is a dialect of Middle Aramaic that was once spoken across much of the Fertile Crescent. Having first appeared around the 1st century AD, classical Syriac became a major literary language throughout the Middle East from the 4th to the 8th centuries. Syriac was originally a local Aramaic dialect in Persian ruled Assyria (Asuristan) and northern Mesopotamia that has evolved under the influence of Christianity into its current form. Before Arabic became the dominant language, Syriac was a major language among Christian communities in the Middle East and Central Asia.

The **Talmud:** is the record of rabbinic discussions pertaining to Jewish law, ethics, philosophy, customs, and history. The Talmud has two components: the Mishnah (c. 200 CE), the first written compendium of Judaism's Oral Law; and the Gemara (c. 500 CE), a discussion of the Mishnah and related Tannaitic writings that often ventures onto other subjects and expounds broadly on the Tanakh.

The **Tanakh:** is a name used in Judaism for the canon of the Hebrew Bible also known as the Masoretic Text. The name is an acronym formed from the initial Hebrew letters of the Masoretic Text's three traditional subdivisions: The Torah (five Books of Moses), Nevi'im ("Prophets"), and Ketuvim ("Writings")—hence **TaNakh**. According to the Talmud, much of the contents of the Tanakh were compiled by the "Men of the Great Assembly" by 450 BCE and have since remained unchanged. Modern scholars believe that the process of canonization of the Tanakh became finalized between 200 BCE and 200 CE.

**Targum:** an Aramaic translation of the Hebrew (Old Testament) Bible (Tanakh) written or compiled from the Second Temple period until the early Middle Ages (late first millennium). The two major genres of Targum reflect two geographical and cultural centers of Jewish life during the period of their creation, namely the lands of Israel and Babylonia.

**Tetragrammaton:** the four Hebrew letters usually transliterated YHWH or JHVH that form a biblical proper name of God, which we pronounce as Yahweh. “Tetragram” is from the Greek and means a word of four letters.

**Textual Criticism:** given a manuscript copy, several or many copies, but not the original document, the textual critic seeks to reconstruct the original text as closely as possible. Many of the “critical” Greek texts are named after the textual critic who reconstructed the manuscript or the publisher that printed it. Some names are Erasmus (1516), Stephens (Estienne) (1546), Elzevir (1624), Griesbach (1777), Westcott and Hort (1881), Lachmann (1831), Tischendorf (1841), Tregelles (1857), and Nestle-Aland (1977).

**Textual Variant:** When a text is altered from the original copy either deliberately or inadvertently, it is called a variant. Some common alterations include the deletion, rearrangement, repetition, or replacement of one or more words.

**Textus Receptus** (Latin meaning “received text”): is a name for the Greek text of the New Testament that was used by most Reformation-era translations including Tyndale, Luther, and later, the King James Version. It was the basic text of Erasmus and Stephens (Estienne).

**Torah:** is from Hebrew meaning “instruction or teachings” and refers to the first five books of the Hebrew biblical canon. The common names of the books in English, derived from the ancient Septuagint translation, are: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The Torah is also called the Pentateuch which is from the Greek (*penta* – five and *teuchos* – tool or book). These books are also called the Five Books of Moses.