

# PART ONE: KNOWING THE BIBLE

## CHAPTER 3 IN WHAT LANGUAGE WAS THE BIBLE WRITTEN?

### THE OLD TESTAMENT

It was originally written in **the Hebrew language**. Some small passages of some books were written in Aramaic (a Semitic language very close to Hebrew).

In the third century BC there was a request to make an official version of the entire Old Testament into the **Greek language**. Around 285 B.C. Seventy-two specialized sages moved to Alexandria (in Egypt) and began the composition of this version. They started with the most important books. Then, for many years, the work was continued until it ended (about the second century) with the Greek version of all the books of the Old Testament. This version is popularly known as the "*Version of the Seventy*" (rounding the number of the 72 scholars to 70).

Both the Hebrew and Greek books were used by the Jewish people interchangeably, recognizing the validity of both languages. In fact, the early Christians used the Greek version.

### THE NEW TESTAMENT

All the books of the New Testament were written in the **Greek language**.

Why was the New Testament written in Greek when Jesus and the apostles spoke in Aramaic? Because Greek, at that time, was the language used by everyone as a common language (it was spoken in all major countries). Since Jesus' message was to spread throughout the world, the language that everyone knew and spoke was used.

