

Questions about the earliest encounters between Jesus, his friends and Jewish leaders

Village gatherings

In village gatherings (synagogues), what languages were used by those who spoke?

Were the gatherings open to all, lettered and unlettered?

Were all or any allowed to speak?

Who quoted the 'scriptures'?

How were texts quoted? Were they recited from memory?

If so, how?

Was it (a) by rote, word-for-word recall of a written text?

If a rote-recall, what language was used?

Was it a Hebrew text or a Greek Septuagint text recited from memory?

Or were texts read out from a written scroll?

Which language was most used within Galilee in Jesus's day, in Judea, in the diaspora?

How much of the Greek or Hebrew would be understood by illiterate persons present?

Would the reciter then retell the original in Aramaic and elaborate meanings to address the circumstances of those present, initiating discussion, leading in prayer, (or what?)

Or (b) was the recitation from memory but in the vernacular, accurate in respect to meaning rather than written text?

Was the reciter translating a remembered Hebrew or Greek text into a more elaborate Aramaic narrative, expanding single original words, phrases, stories,

thoughts into a more wordy elaboration that made for greater accuracy in transmission and application to the present circumstances of those gathered?

Were there texts remembered at particular seasons, like lectionaries for Christian church services today?

Were texts remembered and recited to meet particular circumstances, arising from the needs and concerns of a particular gathering?

The gatherings of Jesus and his friends

What language did Jesus and his friends use when they were talking together about the Kingdom of God, the Father, and so on?

Aramaic is the most likely language used by illiterate Jewish peasants. Day-to-day experience the most likely source of their inspiration and context of their discussion.