

the Gospel of Matthew in the Hebrew, to whom Bartholemew, one of the twelve apostles had preached, and left the Gospel of Matthew there with them, in the original Hebrew, which was preserved till this time, and this Pantaenus brought with him on his return to Alexandria. Epiphanius, a writer of the fourth century, and bishop of Salamis, in Cyprus, states that in the time of Constantine, a certain Jew, called Joseph, found in a cell at Tiberias, a copy of the Hebrew Gospel ascribed to Matthew. This writer also in speaking of the Nazarenes, who still preserved this Hebrew Gospel, says: "They have the Gospel of Matthew most entire in the Hebrew language among them, for this truly is still preserved among them, as it was at first in Hebrew characters, but I know not whether they have taken away the Genealogy from Abraham to Christ." and in another part of his work against heretics, this Catholic father, speaking of the Ebionites, says: "They also receive the Gospel according to Matthew, for this both they and the Corinthians make use of and no other. They call it the "Gospel according to the Hebrews," for the truth is that Matthew is the only one of the New Testament writers who published his Gospel and preaching in the Hebrew language and Hebrew characters." Some other statements made by this writer will be examined hereafter when we come to enquire wherein the original Hebrew Gospel, preserved by the Nazarenes, differed from the Greek version. Jerome, one of the greatest scholars of his

time, writing at Bethlehem in the latter part of the fourth century, says: "Matthew, also called Levi, who became from a publican an apostle, was the first who composed a Gospel of Christ, and for the sake of those who believe in Christ among the Jews, wrote it in the Hebrew language and letters, but it is uncertain who it was that translated it into Greek. Moreover the Hebrew copy itself is to this time preserved in the library of Caesarea, which Pamphilus, the martyr, with much diligence collected. The Nazarenes who live in Beraea, (a city of Syria,) and make use of this volume, grant me the favor of writing it out, in which (Gospel) there is this observation, that wherever the Evangelist either cites himself or introduces our Saviour as citing any passage out of the Old Testament, he does not follow the translation of the LXX, but the Hebrew copies." Epiphanius also states that the Hebrew Gospel used by the Ebionites began with the account of the baptism of John the Baptist (when Jesus came from Nazareth to be immersed by him in the River Jordan). We also learn from the testimony of many of these fathers, that the Nazarenes, whom they miscall Ebionites, though there was probably a difference of opinion among them regarding the observance of the Mosaic ceremonies, yet they both held and taught, and triumphantly referred to Matthew's original Gospel as proof of their belief that Jesus Christ was the natural offspring of Joseph and Mary, and a legal descendant of the royal family of David, and therefore the