

New American Standard Bible - History

The *New American Standard Bible* (NASB) has evolved from the *American Standard Version* (ASV) of 1901. The ASV, in turn, was the American version of the *Revised Version* (RV) of 1885, also called the *English Revised Version* (ERV). While preserving the literal accuracy of the ASV, the NASB sought to render grammar and terminology in contemporary English. Special attention was given to the rendering of verb tenses to give the English reader a rendering as close as possible to the sense of the original Greek and Hebrew texts. In 1995, the text of the NASB was updated for greater understanding and smoother reading. In an effort to ensure accuracy, recent research on the oldest and best Greek manuscripts of the New Testament was reviewed, and some passages were updated for even greater fidelity to the original manuscripts. ***The original NASB earned the reputation of being the most accurate English Bible translation. The New American Standard Bible update (1995) carried on the NASB tradition of being a true Bible translation, revealing what the original manuscripts actually say—not merely what the translator believes they mean.***

New American Standard Bible - Translation Method

The *New American Standard Bible* is most known for its strict adherence to "formal equivalence" in its translation. The goal of the NASB is to be as literal "word-for-word" as possible. Most Bible scholars hold the NASB to be the most literal of all the modern English Bible translations. In order to make the NASB easier to read while ensuring accuracy, the following methods were used in the 1995 update:

- Archaic "thee's" and "thou's," etc., were updated to modern English.
- Words and phrases that could be misunderstood due to changes in their meaning during the past 20 years were updated to current English.
- Verses with difficult syntax or vocabulary were retranslated into smoother English. Verbs with multiple meanings were retranslated to accurately reflect the context.
- Recent research on the oldest and best Greek manuscripts of the New Testament was reviewed, and some passages were updated.

The NASB 1995 update continued the NASB's tradition of literal translation of the original Greek and Hebrew without compromise. Changes in the text have been kept within the strict parameters set forth by the Lockman Foundation's Fourfold Aim—that they be true to the original manuscripts, grammatically correct, understandable, and give the Lord Jesus Christ His proper place, the place which the Word gives Him.

New American Standard Bible - Pro's and Con's

Probably the greatest strength of the *New American Standard Bible* is its literalness. More so than any other English Bible translation, the NASB seeks to take what was originally said in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek and say the same thing in English. The primary downside to this method is that it sometimes results in the English not being as smooth and free-flowing as it could be. Overall, though, the *New American Standard Bible* is an excellent Bible translation.

New American Standard Bible - Sample Verses

[John 1:1,14](#) - "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."

[John 3:16](#) - "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

[John 8:58](#) - "Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am."

[Ephesians 2:8-9](#) - "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast."

[Titus 2:13](#) - "looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,"

New Living Translation – History The goal of the *New Living Translation* (NLT) is a translation of the Bible into a clear, readable form of modern English. The *New Living Translation* was completed and published by Tyndale House in 1996. Soon after the publication of the first edition, the NLT Bible Translation Committee began a further review and revision of the translation. Their goal was "to increase the level of precision without sacrificing the text's easy-to-understand quality." The Second Edition of the NLT (also called the NLTse) was released in 2004. It reflects a translation style that is slightly less dynamic than the first edition in many places, yet it still retains natural contemporary English. The second edition also brought a poetic format to many passages, especially that of the prophetic writing in the Old Testament. Another minor revision was completed in 2007 with minor textual and footnote changes. For most of 2008 and 2009, the NLT has consistently averaged a 4th-spot ranking in Bible sales (based upon both unit sale and dollar sales) according to the Christian Booksellers Association. However, in July 2008, the NLT gained the #1 spot in unit sales, unseating the NIV for the first time in over two decades.

New Living Translation – Translation Method Originally starting out as an effort to revise *The Living Bible*, a paraphrased version of the Bible, the project evolved into a new English translation from the best Hebrew and Greek texts. The *New Living Translation* is based on the most recent scholarship in the theory of translation. The challenge for the translators was to create a text that would make the same impact in the life of modern readers that the original text had for the original readers. In the *New Living Translation*, this is accomplished by translating entire thoughts (rather than just words) into natural, everyday English. The NLT follows a combination of formal equivalence (word-for-word) and dynamic equivalence (thought-for-thought) methods of translation.

New Living Translation – Pro's and con's The *New Living Translation* is easy to read and easy to understand. It is written in quality and contemporary English. However, when it goes more toward dynamic equivalence and less toward formal equivalence, the NLT sometimes goes astray, interpreting rather than translating.

New Living Translation – Sample verses

[John 1:1,14](#) – "In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son."

[John 3:16](#) – "For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."

[John 8:58](#) – "Jesus answered, 'I tell you the truth, before Abraham was even born, I Am!'"

[Ephesians 2:8-9](#) – "God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it."

[Titus 2:13](#) – "while we look forward with hope to that wonderful day when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed."

New International Version – History The *New International Version* (NIV) was conceived in 1965 when, after several years of study by committees from the Christian Reformed Church and the National Association of Evangelicals, a trans-denominational and international group of scholars met at Palos Heights, Illinois, and agreed on the need for a new translation in contemporary English. Their conclusion was endorsed by a large number of church leaders who met in Chicago in 1966. Responsibility for the version was delegated to a self-governing body of fifteen biblical scholars, the Committee on Bible Translation, and in 1967, the New York Bible Society undertook the financial sponsorship of the project. In 1973 the New Testament was published. The first printing of the entire Bible was in 1978. Additional changes were made in 1983. Versions based on the NIV are the *New International Version – UK* (NIVUK) and the *New International Reader's Version* (NIrV), an “easier to read and understand” version of the NIV. In 2005, a significant revision of the NIV, known as the *Today's New International Version*, was published by Zondervan. The TNIV's primary change from the NIV is a more gender-inclusive translation of certain terms. Because of its controversial gender inclusiveness, the TNIV was the subject of a great deal of criticism from the evangelical world and went out of print in 2009.

In March, 2011, the publisher of the NIV, Zondervan, issued a new edition, the *2011 New International Version*. This edition will replace the 1984 NIV, which will no longer be published. Like its predecessor, the TNIV, the 2011 NIV was translated using gender-neutral translation rules, resulting in the replacement of gender-specific words (e.g. man, woman, he, she, son, daughter) with gender-neutral words (e. g. person, they, child). In many cases these replacements are made even when the original language clearly intends a specific gender. Further, the 2011 NIV alters key verses that define the roles of women (e.g., [1 Timothy 2:12](#) and [Nahum 3:13](#)), which may allow for interpretation consistent with cultural norms regarding the equality of men and women, but which do not accurately reflect the original language of the Scriptures. The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, which reviewed the 2011 NIV, issued a statement saying they could not recommend the 2011 NIV because of "over 3,600 gender-related problems" that were previously in its critique of the TNIV. It is crucial to understand that from 2011 on, the NIV will not be the same NIV the world has known and loved since 1984. When purchasing a Bible, “NIV” will now mean the 2011 NIV. Previously printed copies of the 1984 NIV will be sold out and no longer available. When an author quotes a Bible passage in a book and notes it as coming from the NIV, it will probably be the 2011 NIV.

New International Version – Translation method The translation of each book of the Bible was assigned to a team of scholars, and the work was thoroughly reviewed and revised at various stages by three separate committees. The lead committee submitted the developing version to stylistic consultants for their suggestions. Samples of the translation were tested for clarity and ease of reading by various groups of people. The committee held to certain goals for the NIV: that it be an “accurate, beautiful, clear, and dignified translation suitable for public and private reading, teaching, preaching, memorizing, and liturgical use.” The NIV is known especially as a “thought for thought” or “dynamic equivalence” translation rather than a “word for word” translation.

New International Version - Pro's and Con's Probably the greatest strength of the *New International Version* is its readability. The NIV is rendered in smoothly flowing and easy-to-read English. One weakness of the NIV is that it occasionally delves into interpretation rather than strict translation. In the NIV, some passages are translated with more of a "this is what the translator thinks the text means" instead of "this is what the text says." In many instances, the NIV likely has a correct "interpretation" but that misses the point. A Bible translation should take what the Bible says in the original languages and say the same thing in the new language, leaving the interpretation to the reader with the aid of the Holy Spirit. The greatest 'con' of the 2011 NIV, of course, is the inclusion of gender-neutral language and the necessity of interpreting rather than translating in order to present a more culturally sensitive or politically correct version.

New International Version - Sample Verses

[John 1:1, 14](#): "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."

[John 3:16](#): "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

[John 8:58](#): "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"

[Ephesians 2:8-9](#): "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

[Titus 2:13](#): "while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ."

English Standard Version – History The *English Standard Version* (ESV) is a revision of the 1971 edition of the *Revised Standard Version*. The first edition was published in 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. The *ESV Study Bible*, also published by Crossway Bibles, was published in October 2008. It uses the ESV translation and adds extensive notes and articles based on evangelical Christian scholarship. Under noted theologian J. I. Packer, who served as general editor, the translators sought and received permission from the National Council of Churches to use the 1971 edition of the RSV as the English textual basis for the ESV. Difficult passages were translated using the [Masoretic Text](#) of the Hebrew Bible, the [Dead Sea Scrolls](#), and other original manuscripts.

English Standard Version – Translation Method The stated intent of the translators was to produce a readable and accurate translation that stands in the tradition of Bible translations beginning with English religious reformer William Tyndale in 1525–26 and culminating in the *King James Version* of 1611. Examples of other translations in this genre are the *Revised Version* (1881–85), the *American Standard Version* (1901), and the *Revised Standard Version* (1946–1971). In their own words, they sought to follow a literal word-for-word translation philosophy. To that end, the translators sought as far as possible to capture the precise wording of the original text and the personal style of each Bible writer, while taking into account differences of grammar, syntax, and idiom between current literary English and the original languages. The result is a translation that is more literal than the *New International Version*, but more fluent and colloquial than the *New American Standard Bible*.

English Standard Version – Pro’s and Con’s The *English Standard Version* receives complaints from both sides. Some say it is too literal. Others say it is too dynamic. Often, criticism from both sides of an argument indicates that something has achieved a good balance between the two.

English Standard Version – Sample verses

[John 1:1, 14](#) – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

[John 3:16](#) – “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

[John 8:58](#) – “Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.’”

[Ephesians 2:8-9](#) – “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

[Titus 2:13](#) – “waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.”

Amplified Bible – History The *Amplified Bible* was the first Bible project of The Lockman Foundation, in conjunction with Zondervan. The first full edition of the *Amplified Bible* was published in 1965. It is largely a revision of the *American Standard Version* of 1901, with reference made to various texts in the original languages. The *Amplified Bible* was published in six stages: Gospel of John (1954); New Testament (1958); Old Testament Volume Two (Job-Malachi) (1962); Old Testament Volume One (Genesis-Esther) (1964); Complete Bible (1965); Updated Edition (1987).

Amplified Bible - Translation method The *Amplified Bible* **attempts to take both word meaning and context into account in order to accurately translate the original text** from one language into another. The *Amplified Bible* does this through the use of explanatory alternate readings and amplifications to assist the reader in understanding what Scripture really says. **Multiple English word equivalents to each key Hebrew and Greek word clarify and amplify meanings that may otherwise have been concealed by the traditional translation method.**

Amplified Bible - Pro's and Con's The *Amplified Bible* can be a valuable study tool, as the different “alternate” renderings can give additional insight into the meaning of a text. The problem is the words the AMP gives alternate renderings for CAN mean those things, but do not mean ALL of those things. The fact that a word can have different meanings does not mean that every possible meaning is a valid rendering each time the word occurs. Also, it being based on the *American Standard Version* results in some of its wordings sounding archaic.

Amplified Bible - Sample Verses

[John 1:1, 14](#) - “In the beginning [before all time] was the Word (Christ), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God Himself. And the Word (Christ) became flesh (human, incarnate) and tabernacled (fixed His tent of flesh, lived awhile) among us; and we [actually] saw His glory (His honor, His majesty), such glory as an only begotten son receives from his father, full of grace (favor, loving-kindness) and truth.”

[John 3:16](#) - “For God so greatly loved and dearly prized the world that He [even] gave up His only begotten (unique) Son, so that whoever believes in (trusts in, clings to, relies on) Him shall not perish (come to destruction, be lost) but have eternal (everlasting) life.”

[John 8:58](#) - “Jesus replied, I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, before Abraham was born, I AM.”

[Ephesians 2:8-9](#) - “For it is by free grace (God's unmerited favor) that you are saved (delivered from judgment and made partakers of Christ's salvation) through [your] faith. And this [salvation] is not of yourselves [of your own doing, it came not through your own striving], but it is the gift of God; Not because of works [not the fulfillment of the Law's demands], lest any man should boast. [It is not the result of what anyone can possibly do, so no one can pride himself in it or take glory to himself.]”

[Titus 2:13](#) - “Awaiting and looking for the [fulfillment, the realization of our] blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Christ Jesus (the Messiah, the Anointed One).”