

# LEADER GUIDE

## SESSION 2: TRANSLATIONS AND CHOOSING A BIBLE

### Slide #1: Title Slide



### Slide #2: Translations and Bible Versions



### Slide #3: What's up with all the "different" Bibles and bible versions?

When a person gets interested in the Bible and reading it for themselves they are in for a surprise when they go online or to a bookstore to pick out a bible.



**Slide #4:** Like an isle at the grocery store they are presented with a host of options for bibles. Not really though. It's a host of options for translations or versions. So they are forced to pick and they have not been prepared for this.



Most people don't ever get educated on how to make an educated and informed decision about which translation should I buy/read/study from and why?

How do they differ?

Why do they differ?

Today I'm going to take a stab at the whole translation discussion. Some of you may think I'm taking this further than you want or need to go but many of you I think will find yourselves much more relaxed about this whole topic when I'm done today.

Some perhaps have, like me, had people that look to them as a mentor in the faith ask them how do I pick a translation and not know what to say or why you feel the way you feel other than the xyz translation is what I grew up with or have become accustomed to but I don't know if its best or not. Its just what I use.

So how did we get here? That is the quest of the day.

Then How do they differ?

What makes some translations better than others?

## BIBLE TRANSLATION HISTORY

### Slide #5: Stage 1: Original Manuscripts - Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek

- OT Original Language: Hebrew and Aramaic
- NT Original Language: Greek
- Divinely Inspired Authors/Prophets

### Slide #6: Stage 2: Copies and Copies of Copies (etc. etc.)

- By Professional trained and educated Scribes **preserved the scripture through copies**
- Painstaking Processes
  - They could only use clean animal skins, both to write on, and even to bind manuscripts.
  - **Each column of writing could have no less than 48, and no more than 60 lines.**
  - **The ink must be black, and of a special recipe.**
  - **They must verbalize each word aloud while they were writing.**
  - They must wipe the pen and wash their entire bodies before writing the word "Jehovah" - every time they wrote it.
  - **There must be a review within 30 days, and if as many as three pages required corrections, the entire manuscript had to be redone.**
  - **The letters, words, and paragraphs had to be counted, and the document became invalid if two letters touched each other. The middle paragraph, word and letter must correspond to those of the original document.**
  - **The documents could be stored only in sacred places (synagogues, etc).**  
As no document containing God's Word could be destroyed, they were stored, or buried, in a genizah – a Hebrew term meaning "hiding place." These were usually kept in a synagogue or sometimes in a Jewish cemetery.

- Copies of Original manuscripts => (minor copyist errors – omissions, misspellings)
- Copies of Copies => (Brought about Variances between copy's)

Should variations and minor errors among manuscripts be a major concern so far as the transmission of inspired text to us is concerned. Well God has been working his plan of redemption through and around deeply flawed human beings and systems since Adam and Eve. The first family, Abraham and Sarah and their descendants through Isaac are a prime case in point. God has been faithful to move forward his plan of redemption century after century.

No we need not be concerned about the existence of minor errors and omissions in the manuscripts in possession today from which translation work continues.

- Notes Notations about textual variants in modern translations

## Slide #7: Stage 3: Translation of Copies from Original Languages

(Early Examples)

- **Aramaic OT – Targum (Heb/Ara to Aramaic) Late BC- Early Christian era**

Aramaic had gradually become the language of the common Jew after the Jewish exile during the 2<sup>nd</sup> temple period 500-0 BC Hebrew manuscripts were eventually translated into Aramaic as speaking and reading Hebrew became more and more rare.

- **Greek OT Septuagint – LXX (Heb/Ara OT translated into Greek) 3<sup>rd</sup> cent ad**

The LXX (Septuagint) is the Greek translation of the OT. After the influence of the Greek empire, Greek was to a vast part of the world what English is today – a common international language. So the Hebrew and Aramaic texts of the bible were translated into Greek.

- **Latin Vulgate is the Latin translation of the OT and NT. (380 AD)**

Came to prevalence under the influence of the Roman Empire. The Roman Catholic church became the official state religion of Rome and Latin was the predominant language of Rome. The Roman Catholic Church became politically powerful and then corrupt. And for several hundred years translation work was repressed because the church didn't want the scriptures accessible to the common man. Why? Because in the hands of the corrupt knowledge is power. And power wishes to control.

- **Wycliffe Bible was the first English translation. 1380's AD**

But not a legitimate translation because it was a translation of the Latin Vulgate into English rather than from HEB/ARA/GRK) Why?????

Church Resistance and Control over access to ancient manuscripts.

This era of Church History coincided with what historians call the dark ages. Not a bad term for church history too when you think about it. The church's political power and influence thrived by keeping the world in the dark in terms of biblical knowledge and access. However, there were those who pressed forward in translation work at the risk of their lives because Evangelism in the heart of the truly Christian man and women will not be controlled.

So because of courageous, evangelistic, educated servants of Christ translations in English, German arose.

- **First Legit translation t`o English and German (16<sup>th</sup> century)... Luther, Tyndale, Coverdale**
- **But, Challenges....**

## Slide #8: Stage 3: Translation of Copies from Original Languages (Continued)

### Translation work Challenges:

- Inequivalence's in Language Devices  
(Figures of speech, metaphors, syllable count in poetry, hyperbole etc.)
- Inequivalence's Vocabulary
- Continuous Language Evolution
- Cultural and Religious Resistance

## **Slide #9: Stage 4: Dead Sea Scrolls Discovery**

Ok so on to Stage 4. What does a Bedouin shepherd boy, a missing goat, and a rock have to do with the most significant development in the history of Bible translation work?

In late 1946 or early 1947 a Bedouin shepherd boy was entertaining himself by sharpening his rock throwing skills while looking for a lost sheep. In an area with lots of caves he was aiming his rocks at cave openings for targets. One of his throws disappeared through the entrance of a cave but made a very unique sound as it crashed into clay jars.

**Slide #10:** In that cave vessels with scrolls were being stored that had been undisturbed for 2000 years old. Over the next ten years the area was excavated and the ruins of ancient community were discovered along with several hundred scrolls in various caves. **(Slide 11)**

In those caves were multiple copies of biblical manuscripts. Entire and complete copies of entire books of the bible. And in some cases many, many complete copies of some of the books. There were 19 copies of the book of Isaiah, 25-deut, and 30 of Psalms.

## **Slide #12: Significance on Modern Translation Work:**

- Yielded Complete Manuscripts vs Fragments
- Earliest MS by 1000yrs (200 BC-100 AD)
- Revealed very little variance over 1000 yrs and multiple generations of copy work
- Non-biblical writings from that era also discovered = This yielded NT era Historical Cultural Context and commentary on the OT from the time of Christ
- Reignited New Era in Translation Work

Why? Because translation committees/teams did not have access to these more ancient resources at the time they did their work provided impetus to produce updated versions.

What is the bottom line related to this development? Any translation done prior to the 1960's or not updated after the 1960's doesn't have the influence of the most ancient manuscripts available reflected in its work.

Question. What if scribes way back prior to that Qumran community did not value the scriptures enough to produce copies of copies of copies? There would be no bible. You and I owe our knowledge of God and access to God's word to multiple generations of scribes who meticulously duplicated them by hand letter by letter for centuries.

The Qumran scrolls are the oldest biblical manuscripts available to mankind and they are 1000+ years later than the life of Moses.

No other writings in all of human history have been labored over to be preserved like the scriptures have. Just one more example of how God has intervened through the work of man to continue his mission of salvation of his world.

Now that is the background to modern translation. Now for some education on the translations themselves that are available to you today.

## BIBLE TRANSLATION BASICS

### Slide #13: Methods – 3 Primary Types of Translations

- 1) Word for Word or Essentially Literal Translations (Formal Equivalence)

*Emphasizes strict adherence to the words and grammatical structure of the original language*

- 2) Thought for Thought or Mediating Translations (Formal Equivalence)

*Values adherence to the words and grammatical structure but balanced with a value on readability and comprehension to reader.*

- 3) Paraphrases (Dynamic Equivalence)

*Dynamic Equivalent: stresses readability and comprehension above adherence to Vocabulary and grammatical preservation.*

**Slide 14:** Word for Word Choices

**Slide 15:** Thought for Thought Choices

**Slide 16:** Paraphrase Choices

**Slide 17:** Illustration of updating a version

**Illustration: Updates**

1 SAMUEL 14:12

**KJV 1611** (authorized KJ Version)  
"And the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armour bearer, and said, Come up to us, and we will shew you a thing.

**KJV 1769** (Oxford Standard KJ Version)  
"And the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armourbearer, and said, Come up to us, and we will shew you a thing.

**KJV 1982** (NKJV) Then the men of the garrison called to Jonathan and his armorbearer, and said, "Come up to us, and we will show you something."

**Slide 18:** Illustration: Comparing literal vs. thought for thought

**Illustration:  
Literal vs Thought for Thought**

1 SAMUEL 14:12

**NKJV 1982**  
Then the men of the garrison called to Jonathan and his armorbearer, and said, "Come up to us, and we will show you something."

**NIV 1984**  
The men of the outpost shouted to Jonathan and his armor -bearer, "Come up to us and we'll teach you a lesson."

**Slide 19:** What's up with all the "different" bibles

Study' Bibles include footnotes, maps, commentary

Target Audience Bibles: include devotions, articles, illustrations target to its audience of Men, or women, teenagers, athletes, or .....

**Slide 20-22:** Examples of Bibles



**Slide 23:** Rev 22:18-19

**Revelations 22:18-19**

- 18 I warn everyone who hears the words of **the prophecy of this book**: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book,
- 19 and if anyone takes away from the **words of the book of this prophecy**, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in **this book**.

*The Apostle John in the conclusion to Revelation*

# APPENDIX

## Additional Material for Session 2

### GOD'S WORD-BIBLE VERSIONS

**A strictly literal translation of John 3:16** – thus for loved God the world that Son - His only begotten [or unique or only] He gave, that everyone believing in Him – not should perish but should have life eternal.

#### **Essentially Literal Translations:**

King James [KJV] and New King James [NKJV]  
New American Standard Bible [NASB]  
English Standard Version [ESV]  
New Revised Standard Version [NRSV] \*\*\*

#### **Mediating Translations:**

Holman Christian Standard Bible [HCSB]  
New International Version [NIV 2011] \*\*\*  
New English Translation [NET] \*\*\*

#### **Academic Paraphrases [or Dynamic Equivalent Translations]:**

New Living Translation [NLT] \*\*\*  
God's Word [GW] \*\*\*  
Good News Bible [GNB] \*\*\*  
Contemporary English Version [CEV] \*\*\*  
New Century Version [NCV] \*\*\*

#### **Paraphrases:**

The Living Bible (conservative) – Ken Taylor \*\*\*  
The Message (free) – Eugene Peterson \*\*\*

**Compare the following passages in the various versions to see the difference between a translation and a paraphrase. Notice how thoughts and words may be added or deleted in a paraphrase. \*\*\* Versions using gender modified language.**

<b>Ephesians 1:4</b>
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**NASB:** ...just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless in Him.

**ESV:** ... even as he chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless in him.

**HCSB:** ... for He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless in His sight.

**NIV 2011:** For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

**NLT:** Long ago, even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes.

**The Message:** Long before he laid down the earth's foundation, he had us in mind, had settled on us as the focus of his love.

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## Additional Material for Session 2

### THE WORD ON GOD'S WORD

#### Why do we need different translations of Scripture?

Read the following passage in the KJV: Genesis 31:34-36, 2 Kings 18:27

#### Genesis 31:34-36 King James Version (KJV)

<sup>34</sup>Now Rachel had taken the images, and put them in the camel's furniture, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but found them not. <sup>35</sup>And she said to her father, Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise up before thee; for the custom of women is upon me. And he searched but found not the images. <sup>36</sup>And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban: and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What is my trespass? what is my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me?

#### 2 Kings 18:27 King James Version (KJV)

<sup>27</sup>But Rabshakeh said unto them, Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? hath he not sent me to the men which sit on the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piss with you?

How would you characterize these passages? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Read Ephesians 1:3-14

#### Ephesians 1:3-14 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

<sup>3</sup> Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, <sup>4</sup> just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before <sup>[a]</sup>Him. In love <sup>5</sup> <sup>[b]</sup>He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the <sup>[c]</sup>kind intention of His will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. <sup>7</sup> In <sup>[d]</sup>Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace <sup>8</sup> which He <sup>[e]</sup>lavished on <sup>[f]</sup>us. In all wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup> He <sup>[g]</sup>made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His <sup>[h]</sup>kind intention which He purposed in Him <sup>10</sup> with a view to an administration <sup>[i]</sup>suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things <sup>[j]</sup>in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him <sup>11</sup> <sup>[k]</sup>also we <sup>[l]</sup>have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, <sup>12</sup> to the end that we who were the first to hope in <sup>[m]</sup>Christ would be to the praise of His glory. <sup>13</sup> In <sup>[n]</sup>Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also <sup>[o]</sup>believed, you were sealed in <sup>[p]</sup>Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, <sup>14</sup> who is <sup>[q]</sup>given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of *God's own* possession, to the praise of His glory.

This is one sentence in the underlying Greek manuscripts. Summarize the passage. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



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## Additional Material for Session 2

**After reading these passages, discuss why we can benefit from differing translations of God's Word.**

### **What Does God's Word Say About Scripture?**

**Summarize the following Scriptures:**

Proverbs 30:5-6 \_\_\_\_\_

John 17:17 \_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 40:8 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Timothy 3:16 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Peter 1: 20 – 21 \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 4:2 & Revelation 22:18-19 \_\_\_\_\_

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### **How would you summarize what God says about His Word?**

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\_\_\_\_\_

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## Additional Material for Session 2

### WAYS IN WHICH GOD'S WORD IS BEING CHANGED

**Academic Paraphrases (Dynamic Equivalent or Thought for Thought translations):** Academic paraphrases tend to simplify or modify Scripture by translating what the translator believes the original author meant instead of translating his words.

**Read the following translations of I Samuel 20:30.**

**Holman Christian Standard Bible (essentially literal)** – *Then Saul became angry with Jonathan and shouted, "You son of a perverse and rebellious woman".*

**New Living Translation (academic paraphrase)** – *"Saul boiled with rage at Jonathan. "You stupid son of a whore!" he swore at him.*

**Can you see a problem with this (NLT) translation practice? If so, how could it affect the reliability of God's Word?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Read Romans 3:23-25 and write down the theological terms found in the passage.**

– *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. They are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. God presented Him as a propitiation through faith in His blood. (Holman Christian Standard Bible)* \_\_\_\_\_

**Now read the same passage in the New Living Translation (Academic Paraphrase)**

**NLT** – *For all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet now God in his gracious kindness declares us not guilty. He has done this through Christ Jesus, who has freed us by taking away our sins. For God sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sins and to satisfy God's anger.*

**What is missing in the NLT's academic paraphrase of Romans 3:23-25? How could this affect a person's understanding of Scripture?** \_\_\_\_\_

**A reverse example: Psalm 63:3 (The Hebrew word "hesed" means all of the following: mercy, love, kindness, faithfulness, goodness, devotion).**

**HCSB** – *My lips will glorify You because your faithful love is better than life.*

**NIV 2011** – *Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you.*

**What happened to the word "hesed" when it was translated in the NIV 2011?** \_\_\_\_\_

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## Additional Material for Session 2

### WAYS IN WHICH GOD'S WORD IS BEING CHANGED

#### **Gender Modified Language:**

Gender modified language replaces male terms such as he, him, his, son, brother, etc. with gender neutral language such as they, them, their, brothers and sisters, etc.). This practice has made subtle, but important, changes in some translations of Scripture.

If Scripture truly is inspired by God, He knows which prophecies in the Old Testament refer to Jesus in the New Testament. For example, when the Holy Spirit inspired the Apostle John to write John 19:36, the passage refers back to Psalm 34:20 as a prophecy concerning Christ's crucifixion. In literal and mediating translations (except the NRSV & NET) the wording of the prophecy reflects the original Hebrew wording "his bones", but in an effort to eliminate the male term "his", most academic paraphrases (utilizing gender modified language) have changed the wording to "their bones" or something similar.

**What is the problem with such changes?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Translator Bias:** In Isaiah 7:14 the prophet is making a prophecy which he did not fully understand. When referring to that prophecy, the Apostle Matthew (Matthew 1:23) quotes Isaiah 7:14 as follows:

"See, the virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they will name Him Immanuel." Matthew 1:23  
HCSB

If you compare this quote to Isaiah 7:14 in conservative translations of Scripture (KJV, NKJV, NASB, ESV, HCSB, etc.) the word "virgin" is always part of verse 14. But if one looks at the verse in the RSV, NRSV or NET the word "virgin" is replaced by "young woman" with a footnote "Greek – virgin".

**Does this exclusion of the word "virgin" affect the Biblical doctrine of the virgin birth? Why or why not?**

\_\_\_\_\_

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**If you were going to purchase a new Bible, what criteria would you use to be assured that you were choosing a reliable translation of God's Word?**

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## Additional Material for Session 2

### ESSENTIALLY LITERAL & MEDIATING TRANSLATIONS

**Definition: Idiom** = an expression in a language which has a meaning that cannot be derived from the individual words used to form the idiomatic phrase (example: "Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket." Isaiah 40:15 NIV 84)

#### 1 Samuel 14:12 - ESSENTIALLY LITERAL TRANSLATIONS

##### English Standard Version (ESV)

<sup>12</sup> And the men of the garrison hailed Jonathan and his armor-bearer and said, "Come up to us, and we will show you a thing." And Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, "Come up after me, for the LORD has given them into the hand of Israel."

##### New King James Version (NKJV)

<sup>12</sup> Then the men of the garrison called to Jonathan and his armorbearer, and said, "Come up to us, and we will show you something." Jonathan said to his armorbearer, "Come up after me, for the LORD has delivered them into the hand of Israel."

##### New American Standard Bible (NASB)

<sup>12</sup> So the men of the garrison hailed Jonathan and his armor bearer and said, "Come up to us and we will tell you something." And Jonathan said to his armor bearer, "Come up after me, for the LORD has given them into the hands of Israel."

#### 1 Samuel 14:12 - MEDIATING TRANSLATIONS

##### Holman Christian Standard Bible

The men of the garrison called to Jonathan and his armor-bearer. "Come on up, and we'll teach you a lesson!" they said. "Follow me," Jonathan told his armor-bearer, "for the LORD has handed them over to Israel."

##### New International Version 1984

The men of the outpost shouted to Jonathan and his armor-bearer, "Come up to us and we'll teach you a lesson." So Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, "Climb up after me; the LORD has given them into the hand of Israel."

##### New English Translation

Then the men of the garrison said to Jonathan and his armor bearer, "Come on up to us so we can teach you a thing or two!" Then Jonathan said to his armor bearer, "Come up behind me, for the LORD has given them into the hand of Israel!"

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<b>Bible Versions: A Brief Comparison</b>	
<p><b>King James Version:</b> The KJV (1611 - most recently updated in 1769) is a literal translation written in Elizabethan English. It was the standard in American churches until recent years and remains the 2nd most popular Bible in America. <b>Strengths:</b> The language is beautiful and poetic. Accuracy. Italics are used to indicate words added by the translators. <b>Weaknesses:</b> The underlying text is based on more recent manuscripts. Many words and phrases are archaic and difficult for modern readers to understand. <b>Reading level:</b> Grade 12 and up.</p>	<p><b>Genesis 1:27</b> - So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.</p> <p><b>Isaiah 7:14</b> - Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.</p>
<p><b>New King James Version:</b> The NKJV (1982) is a literal, modern language update of the KJV. It is based on the same underlying manuscripts as the KJV. <b>Strengths:</b> The language is beautiful and poetic. Accuracy. Translators' notes indicate differences between the underlying manuscripts and older manuscripts, literal renderings when a paraphrase is used, alternate translations, etc. Italics are used to indicate words added by the translators. Pronouns referring to deity are capitalized. <b>Weaknesses:</b> The underlying text is based on more recent manuscripts. The language is sometimes wooden because it is a literal translation and reflects the word order of the underlying Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. <b>Reading level:</b> Grade 11 and up.</p>	<p><b>Genesis 1:27</b> - So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.</p> <p><b>Isaiah 7:14</b> - Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign; Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.</p>
<p><b>New American Standard Bible:</b> The NASB (1995) is a literal translation. It is widely held by evangelicals to be the best example of a literal translation. <b>Strengths:</b> Accuracy. Translators' notes indicate alternate translations, literal renderings when a paraphrase is used, etc. Italics are used to indicate words added by the translators. Pronouns referring to deity are capitalized. Quotations from the Old Testament are capitalized when they appear in the New Testament. <b>Weaknesses:</b> The language is sometimes wooden because it reflects the word order of the underlying Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. <b>Reading level:</b> Grade 11 and up.</p>	<p><b>Genesis 1:27</b> - God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.</p> <p><b>Isaiah 7:14</b> - Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a Son, and she will call His name Immanuel.</p>
<p><b>New Revised Standard Version:</b> The NRSV (1990) is a literal translation using gender modified language. It is the standard text in many liberal denominations. <b>Strengths:</b> The NRSV is, in many ways, a very accurate translation. It is the most precise of the gender modified versions. <b>Weaknesses:</b> The NRSV goes against the principles of a literal translation by introducing gender modified language into the text. The translation includes feminist bias and the same liberal bias found in its predecessor, the Revised Standard Version. <b>Reading level:</b> Grade 10 and up.</p>	<p><b>Genesis 1:27</b> - So God created humankind in his image' in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.</p> <p><b>Isaiah 7:14</b> - Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall call him Immanuel.</p>
<p><b>English Standard Version:</b> The ESV (2001) is an essentially literal modern language translation. It is a revision of the RSV, by conservative, evangelical scholars. Many evangelicals consider it to be the best example of an essentially literal translation. <b>Strengths:</b> The ESV language is elegant and precise. It is the most readable of the literal translations. As a recent translation, it reflects the latest archeological discoveries. <b>Weaknesses:</b> The ESV does not include the extensive translation aids found in the NKJV and NASB. <b>Reading level:</b> Grade 8 and up.</p>	<p><b>Genesis 1:27</b> - So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.</p> <p><b>Isaiah 7:14</b> - Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel.</p>
<p><b>Holman Christian Standard Bible:</b> The HCSB (2009) is a mediating**, modern language translation. The HCSB is more literal than the NIV, but less literal than the ESV. <b>Strengths:</b> Accuracy and readability. The HCSB includes the same types of extensive translation notes found in the NASB and NKJV. Pronouns referring to deity are capitalized. Quotations from the Old Testament are in bold font when they appear in the New Testament. Difficult Biblical terms are defined at the back of the translation. As a recent translation, it reflects the latest archeological discoveries. <b>Weaknesses:</b> Translations that appear as alternate renderings in other versions are often utilized as the text of the HCSB. <b>Reading level:</b> Grade 8 and up.</p>	<p><b>Genesis 1:27</b> - So God created man in his own image, He created him in the image of God; He created them male and female.</p> <p><b>Isaiah 7:14</b> - Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive, have a son, and name him Immanuel.</p>

<p><b><u>New International Version:</u></b> The NIV (1984) is a mediating translation that has become the standard in many evangelical churches. It was the top selling translation in America <u>until it was discontinued</u> by Zondervan in 2011. <b>Strengths:</b> The NIV combines accuracy, readability and elegant language at a level seldom attained by other modern translations. It retains much of the beautiful phraseology which originated in the KJV. <b>Weaknesses:</b> The NIV's translation notes are scant, in comparison to the HCSB and ISV. <b>Reading level:</b> Grade 7 and up.</p>	<p><b>Genesis 1:27</b> - So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.</p> <p><b>Isaiah 7:14</b> - Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.</p>
<p><b><u>New International Version (2011):</u></b> The NIV 2011 is a revision of the 1984 NIV, but with a greater emphasis on academic paraphrase*; in addition the language has been gender modified (male references have been minimized). <b>Strengths:</b> Readability; natural English is utilized. It is the most accurate of the academic paraphrases. <b>Weaknesses:</b> The gender modified language reflects feminist bias and introduces inaccuracies into the Biblical text. The greater emphasis on academic paraphrase reduces this version's precision. <b>Reading level:</b> Grade 7 and up.</p>	<p><b>Genesis 1:27</b> - So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.</p> <p><b>Isaiah 7:14</b> - Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.</p>
<p><b><u>New English Translation:</u></b> The NET (2006) is a mediating translation with a great deal of academic paraphrase. It was translated by a relatively small number of professors at Dallas Theological Seminary, with the help of graduate students and on-line feed-back from interested parties. <b>Strengths:</b> Readability and relative accuracy. It may be accessed on-line, downloaded and printed, without cost, by anyone. The study edition includes almost 58,000 translators notes (most quite academic). <b>Weaknesses:</b> Gender modified language (but uses the most restraint of any gender modified version). Liberal translation bias is evident in a number of Old Testament passages. The quality of the English is inconsistent. <b>Reading level:</b> Grade 6 and up.</p>	<p><b>Genesis 1:27</b> - God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them.</p> <p><b>Isaiah 7:14</b> - For this reason the sovereign master himself will give you a confirming sign. Look this young woman is about to conceive and will give birth to a son. You, young woman, will name him Immanuel.</p>
<p><b><u>New Living Translation:</u></b> The NLT (1969 &amp; 2007 update) is an academic paraphrase (by a large group of evangelical scholars) of Ken Taylor's Living Bible paraphrase. <b>Strengths:</b> Readability and relative accuracy. The NLT is probably the best example of an academic paraphrase (dynamic equivalent translation). For the most part, the language is dignified, natural English. <b>Weaknesses:</b> Gender modified language. Occasional lapses into idiomatic / newspaper English. Academic paraphrases, by nature, indulge in needless interpretation. <b>Reading level:</b> Grade 6 and up.</p>	<p><b>Genesis 1:27</b> - So God created human beings in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.</p> <p><b>Isaiah 7:14</b> - All right then, the Lord himself will choose the sign. Look! The virgin* will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel.</p>
<p><b><u>New Century Version:</u></b> The NCV (1978), an academic paraphrase, was originally written for children. It has subsequently been marketed for adults. <b>Strengths:</b> Readability. Natural English. A valuable Bible for those with limited vocabulary. <b>Weaknesses:</b> Gender modified language. Because of the limited vocabulary, the text is occasionally under-translated. Academic paraphrases, by nature, often indulge in needless interpretation. <b>Reading level:</b> Grade 3 and up.</p>	<p><b>Genesis 1:27</b> - So God created human beings in his image. In the image of God, he created them. He created them male and female.</p> <p><b>Isaiah 7:14</b> - Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.</p>
<p><b><u>The Message:</u></b> The Message (1994) is a free paraphrase of Scripture by Eugene Peterson. It converts the tone and ideas in Scripture into street language. <b>Strengths:</b> It has proven to be very popular with the American public. God's word is the basis of the paraphrase. <b>Weaknesses:</b> Scripture has stern warnings about adding to or subtracting from God's Word. The Message adds to, subtracts from and often changes Scripture with abandon. Gender modified language. Feminist and liberal biases are evident. Marketed as a Bible; it is a commentary, at best. <b>Reading level:</b> Grade 4 and up.</p>	<p><b>Genesis 1:27</b> - God spoke: "Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature."</p> <p><b>Isaiah 7:14</b> - Watch for this: A girl who is presently a virgin will get pregnant. She'll bear a son and name him Immanuel (God-With-Us).</p>
<p>** Mediating translations are literal except when a literal translation would be difficult to understand; then an academic paraphrase is utilized.</p>	
<p>* Academic paraphrases provide a natural English equivalent for the meaning of the underlying language. They do not emphasize the words or grammar of the original language.</p>	
<p>Note: Bible Versions are listed from most literal (top) to least literal (bottom).</p>	

