

How Did We Get the Word of God?

QUESTION: Overall, which is your favorite Bible translation?

Why?

“Everything we believe and live as Followers of Jesus is based upon our belief that God has communicated His will to us through His Word, the Bible!”

This lesson study will show the participants in this study some very important truths concerning the Bible as God’s communication to humanity. This is incredibly important information to have, since we live in a day and age where first, the devil stirs up strife and even division over Bible Translations. People become more concerned about “THEIR” translation, then they are about understanding and obeying the messages of the Word of God! Second, we live in a day and time when there is much misinformation and even controversy over various Bible translations! Now, while there are some “NOT-SO-GOOD” translations of the Bible, there is NOT some huge conspiracy inspired by Liberal Seminarians and Interpreters to mis-interpret the Bible for the purpose of misleading the Followers of Jesus!



THE 3-STEP PROCESS IN GOD’S COMMUNICATION OF HIS WORD TO HUMANITY:

- STEP #1**---Inspiration!
- STEP #2**---Revelation!
- STEP #3**---Illumination!

Translating the Word of God!

- Take a look at the following Bible verse from different Bible translations.
- List your observations in the space below.
- Which translation has the "clearest" meaning?

The Scripture verse that we will be looking at first is Acts 9:3-5. It will be given to you below in various different translations. Then you will be asked to give the explanation of what this passage of Scripture means. ENJOY!

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| <p>Douay-Rheims 1899 American Edition</p> | <p>³And as he went on his journey, it came to pass that he drew nigh to Damascus; and suddenly a light from heaven shined round about him. ⁴And falling on the ground, he heard a voice saying to him: Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? ⁵Who said: Who art thou, Lord? And he: I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the goad.</p> |
| <p>King James Version</p> | <p>³And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: ⁴And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? ⁵And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.</p> |
| <p>Wycliffe Bible</p> | <p>³ And when he made his journey, it befelled [And when he made journey, it befell], that he came nigh to Damascus. And suddenly a light from heaven shone about him; ⁴ and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, what pursuest thou me? ⁵ And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And he <i>said</i>, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou pursuest. It is hard to thee, to kick against the prick [It is hard to thee, for to kick against the prick].</p> |

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| New American Standard Bible | <p>³ As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him; ⁴ and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" ⁵ And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He <i>said</i>, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting,</p> |
| English Standard Version | <p>³ Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴And falling to the ground he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" ⁵And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.</p> |
| Amplified Bible | <p>³Now as he traveled on, he came near to Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him, ⁴And he fell to the ground. Then he heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me [harassing, troubling, and molesting Me]? ⁵And Saul said, Who are You, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus, Whom you are persecuting. [a]It is dangerous and it will turn out badly for you to keep kicking against the goad [to offer vain and perilous resistance].</p> |
| New International Version | <p>³ As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" ⁵ "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied.</p> |
| New International Readers Version | <p>³ On his journey, Saul approached Damascus. Suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground. He heard a voice speak to him. "Saul! Saul!" the voice said. "Why are you opposing me?" ⁵ "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus," he replied. "I am the one you are opposing.</p> |
| The Message | <p>³⁻⁴He set off. When he got to the outskirts of Damascus, he was suddenly dazed by a blinding flash of light. As he fell to the ground, he heard a voice: "Saul, Saul, why are you out to get me?" ⁵⁻⁶He said, "Who are you, Master?" "I am Jesus, the One you're hunting down. I want you to get up and enter the city. In the city you'll be told what to do next."</p> |
| New Living Translation | <p>³ As he was approaching Damascus on this mission, a light from heaven suddenly shone down around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?" ⁵ "Who are you, lord?" Saul asked. And the voice replied, "I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting!</p> |
| 1550 Stephanus New Testament <i>(Just Kidding!)</i> | <p>³εν δε τω πορευεσθαι εγενετο αυτον εγγιζειν τη δαμασκω και εξαιφνης περιηστραπεν αυτον φως απο του ουρανου ⁴και πεσων επι την γην ηκουσεν φωνην λεγουσαν αυτω σαουλ σαουλ τι με διωκεις ⁵ειπεν δε τις ει κυριε ο δε κυριος ειπεν εγω ειμι ιησους ον συ διωκεις σκληρον σοι προς κεντρα λακτιζειν</p> |

Following is the 'word-for-word' translation from the Greek into the English of this passage of Scripture...

In moreover - proceeding it came to pass he drew near - to Damascus suddenly also him shone around about a light from - heaven and having fallen on the ground he heard a voice saying to him Saul Saul why me do you persecute he said moreover who are you Lord - moreover I am Jesus whom you persecute [it is] hard for you against the [goads] to kick

What is a "GOAD?"



From Eastons Bible Dictionary:

Goad: (only in [Jdg 3:31](#)), an instrument used by ploughmen for guiding their oxen. Shamgar slew six hundred Philistines with an ox-goad. "The goad is a formidable weapon. It is sometimes ten feet long, and has a sharp point. We could now see that the feat of Shamgar was not so very wonderful as some have been accustomed to think." In [1Sa 13:21](#), a different Hebrew word is used, *dorban*, meaning something pointed. The expression ([Act 9:5](#), omitted in the R.V.), "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks", i.e., against the goad, was proverbial for unavailing resistance to superior power.

Your Turn:

- 1) Which translation did you choose as your favorite?
- 2) Why?
- 3) Which translation did you think conveyed the meaning of this passage?
- 4) Why?

UNDERSTANDING MY BIBLE...

Are there many versions of the Bible, or many translations?

If you cannot read Hebrew or Greek in which the original manuscripts were written, you'll need a translation from those texts. In order for your pastor to teach you from the Word of God, he also must use a translation. In order to live for Christ, you'll need a translation so you can read what He said, and what's been written about him.

The English language has changed dramatically over the years. In fact it has changed so much only with great difficulty could you read any of the Bibles translated a mere 600 years ago! Because the English language is a living language - constantly changing - there is a continual need to translate frequently from the original text, as old words lose their sense of meaning, and new words come into being.

As new manuscripts are discovered, more understanding and accuracy is given to the texts we presently have. Since the King James Version has been translated, there have been 3 very important discoveries. Since 1611 we have found more evidence that lends to more accurate translations, these are:

1. The Codex Sinaiticus (Aleph), discovered in 1844 in the monastery of St. Catherine in the Sinai peninsula by Tischendorf. This was written in the 4th century and contained most of the New Testament.
2. The New Testament papyri in 1895, discovered in Egypt, though fragmented, have proved to be valuable.

3. The Dead Sea Scrolls discovered in 1947 near the Dead Sea, provided nearly all of the Book of Isaiah, and many portions of the Old Testament. These are hundreds of years older than previously known texts, and confirmed much of the Old Testament we already have. These are also duplicated BEFORE the birth of Jesus Christ.

Translation techniques and Biblical Scholarship have tremendously improved in the 100 years. We can have a more precise and accurate translation now - than our forefathers ever dreamed of! Other languages we previously knew little about, now we can understand and see the greater meaning of certain difficult words and phrases.

Today we need an easy-to-read translation - for those of us that are not linguistic scholars and stumble over those 27 letter words. Think about it....since the MESSAGE contained in the Bible is so important, then we MUST be able to give it to the poorest reader in a text they can read! This is not re-interpreting the text, it's giving an accurate rendering from the Hebrew & Greek in a language they can simply read and benefit from. For this reason alone, we need the BEST possible translation we can get...consequently, it must be readable. →THIS then,.....is the task of the Church of Jesus Christ as an Interpreter!

NOTES: Below is a list of some of the most popular Bible translations and a little information about them.

American Standard Version (ASV)

The American Standard Version, also known as the Standard American Edition, Revised Version, is a revised version of the KJV. It was completed in 1885 and newly edited by the American Revision Committee in 1901.
word-for-word

Douay-Rheims (RHE)

The Douay-Rheims is the translation upon which nearly all English Catholic Bible versions are based. It includes the seven Deutero-Canonical books (also known as the Apocrypha).
word-for-word from Latin Vulgate

English Standard Version (ESV)

The ESV Bible is a relatively new Bible translation that combines word-for-word precision and accuracy with literary excellence, beauty, and readability.
word-for-word

GOD'S WORD Translation (GW)

GOD'S WORD Translation (GW) accurately translates the meaning of the original texts into clear, everyday language. Readable and reliable, GW is living, active, and life-changing.
thought-for-thought

Good News Translation (GNT)

The Good News Translation was first published in 1976 by the American Bible Society in a "common language." The simple, everyday language makes it especially popular for children and those learning English.
thought-for-thought

New American Standard (NAS)

The NAS is written in a formal style, but is more readable than the King James Version. It is highly respected as the most literal English translation of the Bible.
word-for-word

New International Version (NIV)

The NIV offers a balance between a word-for-word and thought-for-thought translation and is considered by many as a highly accurate and smooth-reading version of the Bible in modern English.
Combination word-for-word and thought-for-thought

New King James Version (NKJV)

The NKJ is a modern language update of the original King James Version. It retains much of the traditional interpretation and sentence structure of the KJV.
word-for-word

New Living Translation (NLT)

Using modern English, the translators of the NLT focused on producing clarity in the meaning of the text rather than creating a literal, word-for-word equivalence. Their goal was to create a clear, readable translation while remaining faithful to original texts.
thought-for-thought

New Revised Standard (NRS)

The New Revised Standard is a popular translation that follows in the traditions of the King James and Revised Standard Versions. It was written with the goal of preserving the best of the older versions while incorporating modern English.
word-for-word and thought-for-thought

Holman Christian Standard (CSB)

The HCS is a highly readable, accurate translation written in modern English. It is published by Holman Bible Publishers, the oldest Bible publisher in America.
word-for-word

King James Version (KJV)

The KJV is the first version of Scripture authorized by the Protestant church and commissioned by England's King James I.

word-for-word

Lexham English Bible (LEB)

The LEB complements your primary translation with it's transparent design and literal rendering. It helps you see the text of God's Word from another angle.

literal

Revised Standard Version (RSV)

The Revised Standard Version is a revision of the King James Version, the Revised Version, and American Standard Version. This text is intended for both private reading and public worship.

word-for-word using modern American language

The Message (MSG)

The Message is a paraphrase from the original languages written by Eugene, H. Peterson. The Message provides a fresh and unique Bible-reading experience.

thought-for-thought; paraphrase

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