

MAJOR ENGLISH-LANGUAGE VERSIONS OF THE BIBLE

The King James Family

King James (or Authorized) Version (KJV or AV) 1611: the standard authorized Bible of most Protestant churches for more than 300 years; used the original Hebrew and Greek to inform comparison/revision of earlier English versions.

Revised Version or **English Revised Version** (RV or ERV) N.T. 1881, O.T. 1884: first major revision of KJV; done by lengthy committee process including Anglican and most Protestant faiths but NOT Roman Catholics or Eastern Orthodox.

American Revised Version or **American Standard Version** (ARV or ASV) N.T. 1900, O.T. 1901: a re-edited version of the RV, basically the same.

Revised Standard Version (RSV) 1946-1957: an attempt to improve on the language of the RV/ASV; more widely accepted, but not supplanting KJV.

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) 1989: the result of continuing revisions from the committee(s) who made RSV.

New King James Version (NKJV) N.T. 1979, O.T. 1982: a revision of KJV to improve readability of text .

General Protestant

New English Bible (NEB) 1970: first completely new [Protestant] translation from original Bible languages into English since Tyndale.

Revised English Bible (REB) 1989: a revision of the New English Bible (1970), updating according to new scholarship in translation.

Roman Catholic Bibles

Latin Vulgate (St. Jerome) c.400: the Bible of the Western Church through the middle ages; still the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church.

Rheims/Douay c.1582/1610: the official [English] Roman Catholic Bible; translation from Vulgate [n.b. Bishop Challoner revised in mid 1700's, sometimes called "**Challoner-Rheims** Version"].

Ronald Knox Bible N.T. 1945, O.T. 1948: a new and excellent translation of the Vulgate.

Jerusalem Bible (JB) 1966: Catholic translation based on ancient Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic texts, but closely following the French "Bible de Jerusalem" [n.b. begun well after the NAB NT (1941) was done, but finished before the NAB OT (1970)].

New Jerusalem Bible (NJB) 1985: a revision following on the changes made in the French revision of the Bible de Jerusalem (1973) reflecting some new scholarship in research of the original texts and translations.

New American Bible (NAB) O.T. 1969, complete 1970 [added "Confraternity Version" N.T. of Douay]: The first significant Catholic translation since Douay-Rheims; working from original Greek texts mainly, rather than Vulgate (Latin); O.T. also made use of Dead Sea Scrolls; original N.T. rushed and mostly from Vulgate and later (1987) greatly revised/retranslated.

Bibles Preferred by Evangelical Protestants

King James Version

New American Standard Bible (NASB) N.T. 1963, O.T. 1970: conservative, fairly literal translation from mainly Greek texts; attempt to repeat the RV process with more contemporary language; not very well-received.

New International Version (NIV) 1973: a conservative, evangelically oriented translation from Greek and Hebrew texts.

Study Bibles

The Orthodox Study Bible (NKJV) – NT and Psalms, 1993; entire Orthodox Bible, including Orthodox OT (Septuagint), scheduled for 2005.

The NIV Study Bible (NIV) (Evangelical Protestant perspective)

The HarperCollins Study Bible (w/ Apocrypha) (NRSV)

The New Oxford Annotated Bible (w/ Apocrypha) (NRSV)

See also **The Oxford Companion to the Bible**, ed. Metzger and Coogan, 1993.