

HOLY BIBLE

NEW LIVING TRANSLATION



NLT
The Bible Made
CLEAR

THE OLD TESTAMENT

<i>Genesis</i> ... 3	<i>2 Chronicles</i> ... 260	<i>Daniel</i> ... 522
<i>Exodus</i> ... 35	<i>Ezra</i> ... 282	<i>Hosea</i> ... 532
<i>Leviticus</i> ... 62	<i>Nehemiah</i> ... 289	<i>Joel</i> ... 539
<i>Numbers</i> ... 81	<i>Esther</i> ... 299	<i>Amos</i> ... 542
<i>Deuteronomy</i> ... 108	<i>Job</i> ... 304	<i>Obadiah</i> ... 548
<i>Joshua</i> ... 130	<i>Psalms</i> ... 324	<i>Jonah</i> ... 550
<i>Judges</i> ... 145	<i>Proverbs</i> ... 376	<i>Micah</i> ... 552
<i>Ruth</i> ... 160	<i>Ecclesiastes</i> ... 394	<i>Nahum</i> ... 557
<i>1 Samuel</i> ... 163	<i>Song of Songs</i> ... 399	<i>Habakkuk</i> ... 559
<i>2 Samuel</i> ... 182	<i>Isaiah</i> ... 404	<i>Zephaniah</i> ... 562
<i>1 Kings</i> ... 199	<i>Jeremiah</i> ... 446	<i>Haggai</i> ... 565
<i>2 Kings</i> ... 219	<i>Lamentations</i> ... 486	<i>Zechariah</i> ... 567
<i>1 Chronicles</i> ... 239	<i>Ezekiel</i> ... 491	<i>Malachi</i> ... 573

ALPHABETICAL LISTING

<i>Acts</i> ... 654	<i>James</i> ... 735
<i>Amos</i> ... 542	<i>Jeremiah</i> ... 446
<i>1 Chronicles</i> ... 239	<i>Job</i> ... 304
<i>2 Chronicles</i> ... 260	<i>Joel</i> ... 539
<i>Colossians</i> ... 711	<i>John</i> ... 637
<i>1 Corinthians</i> ... 685	<i>1 John</i> ... 743
<i>2 Corinthians</i> ... 694	<i>2 John</i> ... 746
<i>Daniel</i> ... 522	<i>3 John</i> ... 747
<i>Deuteronomy</i> ... 108	<i>Jonah</i> ... 550
<i>Ecclesiastes</i> ... 394	<i>Joshua</i> ... 130
<i>Ephesians</i> ... 704	<i>Jude</i> ... 748
<i>Esther</i> ... 299	<i>Judges</i> ... 145
<i>Exodus</i> ... 35	<i>1 Kings</i> ... 199
<i>Ezekiel</i> ... 491	<i>2 Kings</i> ... 219
<i>Ezra</i> ... 282	<i>Lamentations</i> ...
<i>Galatians</i> ... 700	<i>Leviticus</i> ... 62
<i>Genesis</i> ... 3	<i>Luke</i> ... 613
<i>Habakkuk</i> ... 559	<i>Malachi</i> ... 573
<i>Haggai</i> ... 565	<i>Mark</i> ... 599
<i>Hebrews</i> ... 727	<i>Matthew</i> ... 577
<i>Hosea</i> ... 532	<i>Micah</i> ... 552
<i>Isaiah</i> ... 404	<i>Nahum</i> ... 557

THE NEW TESTAMENT

<i>Matthew</i> ... 577	<i>Ephesians</i> ... 704	<i>Hebrews</i> ... 727
<i>Mark</i> ... 599	<i>Philippians</i> ... 708	<i>James</i> ... 735
<i>Luke</i> ... 613	<i>Colossians</i> ... 711	<i>1 Peter</i> ... 738
<i>John</i> ... 637	<i>1 Thessalonians</i> ... 714	<i>2 Peter</i> ... 741
<i>Acts</i> ... 654	<i>2 Thessalonians</i> ... 717	<i>1 John</i> ... 743
<i>Romans</i> ... 675	<i>1 Timothy</i> ... 719	<i>2 John</i> ... 746
<i>1 Corinthians</i> ... 685	<i>2 Timothy</i> ... 722	<i>3 John</i> ... 747
<i>2 Corinthians</i> ... 694	<i>Titus</i> ... 724	<i>Jude</i> ... 748
<i>Galatians</i> ... 700	<i>Philemon</i> ... 726	<i>Revelation</i> ... 749

ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF BIBLE BOOKS

<i>Acts</i> ... 654	<i>James</i> ... 735	<i>Nehemiah</i> ... 289
<i>Amos</i> ... 542	<i>Jeremiah</i> ... 446	<i>Numbers</i> ... 81
<i>1 Chronicles</i> ... 239	<i>Job</i> ... 304	<i>Obadiah</i> ... 548
<i>2 Chronicles</i> ... 260	<i>Joel</i> ... 539	<i>1 Peter</i> ... 738
<i>Colossians</i> ... 711	<i>John</i> ... 637	<i>2 Peter</i> ... 741
<i>1 Corinthians</i> ... 685	<i>1 John</i> ... 743	<i>Philemon</i> ... 726
<i>2 Corinthians</i> ... 694	<i>2 John</i> ... 746	<i>Philippians</i> ... 708
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<i>Ecclesiastes</i> ... 394	<i>Joshua</i> ... 130	<i>Revelation</i> ... 749
<i>Ephesians</i> ... 704	<i>Jude</i> ... 748	<i>Romans</i> ... 675
<i>Esther</i> ... 299	<i>Judges</i> ... 145	<i>Ruth</i> ... 160
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<i>Ezra</i> ... 282	<i>Lamentations</i> ... 486	<i>Song of Songs</i> ... 399
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<i>Isaiah</i> ... 404	<i>Nahum</i> ... 557	<i>Zephaniah</i> ... 562

If you have believed in Christ now for the first time, write your name and today's date on the blank lines as a record of the time of your salvation.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

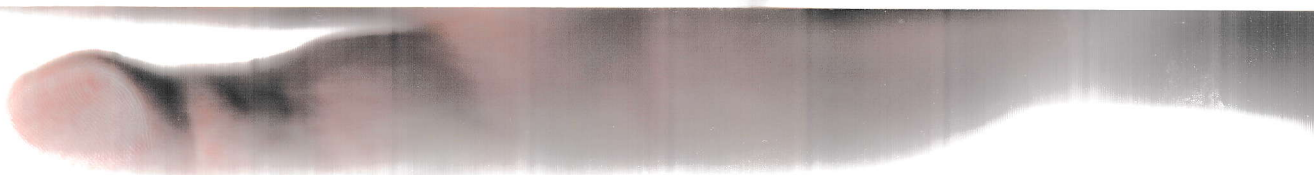
3. Turn away from your sins. "Those who have been born into God's family do not make a practice of sinning, because God's life is in them. So they can't keep on sinning, because they are children of God" (1 John 3:9). As a Christian, you may sin from time to time. But you should not continue to live a sinful lifestyle. Putting your faith in Jesus means that you are willingly turning away from your old sinful nature. It also means that you are living to please God. You can live to please God by obeying the commands he has given everyone in the Bible. If you obey God, you can be sure that you are a Christian and will one day have eternal life in heaven.

ABUNDANT LIFE THE LIFE YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED

STORIES surrounding the life of multimillionaire John D. Rockefeller in the early 1900s, describe her as a wealthy pauper. She wore the same shabby clothing and a threadbare coat with newspapers to keep warm a considerable distance to a grocery store because they were cheaper.

Hetty's stinginess is reputed even to have cost her a leg. At the age of fourteen, he dislocated his leg. Hetty refused to take him to a hospital. Instead, she injured herself and by taking him to free a leg had to be amputated.

When she died in 1916, her estate was valued at more than 300 million dollars, equivalent to more than 300 billion in today's dollars.



ABUNDANT LIFE THE LIFE YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED

STORIES surrounding the life of multimillionaire Hetty Green, who lived in the early 1900s, describe her as a wealthy woman who lived like a pauper. She wore the same shabby clothes over and over and lined her threadbare coat with newspapers to keep warm. She frequently traveled a considerable distance to a grocery store that sold broken cookies because they were cheaper.

Hetty's stinginess is reputed even to have cost her son, Ned, his leg. At the age of fourteen, he dislocated his knee in a sledding accident, but Hetty refused to take him to a hospital. Instead she tried to treat the injury herself and by taking him to free medical clinics. In the end, his leg had to be amputated.

When she died in 1916, her estate was worth \$100 million, the equivalent of many billions in today's dollars. But she had refused to use her

money, instead hoarding it obsessively. She had the resources to live well, but she didn't use them.

When you know God, you have all the resources you need to live the abundant life. But at times, Christians simply do not access all that God has made available in Christ. Like Hetty and her money, we are spiritually wealthy but we sometimes live like spiritual paupers. God promises us the abundant life, but we live like we're homeless and starving in a spiritual sense.

WHAT IS THE ABUNDANT LIFE?

The dictionary defines the word *abundant* as meaning *more than adequate, richly supplied, plentiful*. Jesus said, "My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life" (John 10:10). So the abundant life is one that is richly supplied with what we need, a life that is available because Jesus came to provide it.

But perhaps we should talk about what the abundant life is *not*. It isn't necessarily a life of wealth, comfort, leisure, or freedom from pain. It's not the "good life" we hear about on TV.

But it is a life of access to untold divine resources, the provision God has made for us to live whole, healthy, and hopeful lives. We have everything we need to live the abundant life, the life we were created by God to enjoy. The secret to the abundant life is a close relationship with God as we follow the truths of Scripture.

But unless we know and understand how God means for us to live, unless we dig deeply into his Word, we could wind up like Hetty, starving while the untouched banquet God has laid out for us goes to waste.

HOW DO YOU LIVE THE ABUNDANT LIFE?

Life requires certain elements to sustain it and provide for growth—nourishment, air, and water. If any of these ingredients is in short supply, the living organism will shrivel, weaken, and even die.

The Bible is the nourishment you need to live the abundant life. Jesus is the Bread of Life and Living Water necessary for living as a Christian, and he is made known to you through this book.

Although the Bible was written hundreds of years ago, its message is timeless, personal, and practical because it is from God. As the number one best seller of all time, the Bible is the most read book in

history! Millions of people have discovered their deepest needs—and words of comfort, hope, and guidance.

The Bible contains the recipe for the abundant life: a firm and fulfilling connection to God. The apostle Paul reminds Timothy, "All Scripture is profitable to teach us what is true and to correct our lives. . . . God uses it to prepare and equip us for every good work."

But the Bible is more than an answer book. It is a library of books filled with inspiring stories, majestic promises, and messages and prophecies, and most importantly, the story of God visiting our earth in the person of Jesus Christ.

WHERE DO YOU BEGIN?

If the Bible is fairly new to you, start your journey with the book of Mark (page 599). This book is an introduction to the events that changed the world and led to the abundant life. It is a short, fast-moving book written by a young man who probably wrote it during his year ministry. In addition, Mark probably wrote it to draw on their memories to help write this book.

Then follow the growth of Christianity in the book of Acts (page 654). This picks up where Mark ends and tells the story of the first Christians and how they spread the message of Christ all over the world.

Next read the book of Romans (page 671). It contains letters written by the apostle Paul. It was written to Christians in Rome. In it Paul clearly tells us how humans can find acceptance with God. After that, read some of the shorter books in the New Testament: the Gospel of John, the book of James, and the book of Revelation.

In the Old Testament, read the people's stories. Then continue with some of the other books: the book of Joshua, Ruth, Ezra, Job, Jonah, and the complete stories instead of stopping at the beginning. The story of Gideon is covered in Judges 6.

history! Millions of people have discovered in it answers for their deepest needs—and words of comfort, encouragement, hope, inspiration, and guidance.

The Bible contains the recipe for that which leads to the abundant life: a firm and fulfilling connection to Christ. In 2 Timothy 3:16-17, the apostle Paul reminds Timothy, “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. . . . God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.”

But the Bible is more than an answer book. It is really a library of books filled with inspiring stories, majestic poetry and songs, direct messages and prophecies, and most important of all, the account of God visiting our earth in the person of Jesus Christ.

WHERE DO YOU BEGIN?

If the Bible is fairly new to you, start your reading in the New Testament with the book of Mark (page 599). This book will give you a dramatic introduction to the events that changed the world and can open the door to the abundant life. It is a short, fast-moving biography of Jesus Christ, written by a young man who probably witnessed most of Jesus’ three-year ministry. In addition, Mark probably knew Jesus’ disciples well and drew on their memories to help write this book.

Then follow the growth of Christianity by reading the book of Acts (page 654). This picks up where Mark ends and continues the dynamic story of the first Christians and how they spread the Good News of Jesus Christ all over the world.

Next read the book of Romans (page 675). This is one of the many letters written by the apostle Paul. It was sent to a group of first-century Christians in Rome. In it Paul clearly tells how selfish, arrogant, sinful humans can find acceptance with God. After you finish Romans, read some of the shorter books in the New Testament before turning to the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament, read the people stories in the book of Genesis. Then continue with some of the other books named after the main characters—Joshua, Ruth, Ezra, Job, Jonah, and others. Be sure to read complete stories instead of stopping at the end of a chapter. For instance, the story of Gideon is covered in Judges 6-8 (pages 148-151). The story

of Jonah is covered throughout the whole book (pages 550–551), but it is only four chapters long and can easily be read in one sitting.

Then turn to the Psalms (page 324) and read enough of them to get a sense of what it means to worship God and pour out your feelings to him. Save the longer prophetic books (Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel) and the books of God's law (Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy) until last. You may want to set up a pattern of daily reading that includes several Psalms along with a section from either the Old or New Testament.

HOW TO UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU READ

Three important steps will help you understand your Bible as you read.

Observation. The first step is to observe carefully what the author actually wrote. What is he saying? What is the obvious point? It might help if you stop and restate what the passage says in your own words. Or you can underline the key phrase that sums up what the author is saying. You can then try to understand what he means.

Interpretation. The second step is to try to interpret what the author meant when he wrote the passage. Why did he write what he did? What did it mean to him when he wrote it? For instance, in the book of John, the author says there were a lot of other things he could have written, "But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of his name" (John 20:31). As you read John 5, you might wonder why John included the story of the healing of the man at the pool of Bethesda. This requires the use of your imagination.

A Bible commentary and Bible dictionary will also be helpful as you try to imagine what was going through the author's mind as he wrote the passage. You will find a short summary at the beginning of each book of the Bible. These book summaries will provide helpful perspective about the author and context for each book. You will also find a Dictionary/Concordance at the back of this Bible, where you can look up unfamiliar words and also locate Bible passages that address the topics that concern you. Don't hesitate to use this resource often. If this step of interpreta-

tion is difficult for you, be patient. Take time until its meaning becomes clear.

Application. The third step involves applying the passage to your life. Ask the questions, "What does this passage make in my life? What does it mean to my life? How can I apply this Bible to your life, you will find that the Holy Spirit will show us what is true and to make us realize that the Bible corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us (2 Timothy 3:16).

Don't be afraid to underline key statements and make notes. This will help you locate passages that are important to you. To further your understanding, join with others interested in knowing more about the Bible.

No doubt you've already read the "How to Use This Bible" section, located a few pages back. If you haven't, read it now! It outlines a step-by-step plan to help you understand Jesus Christ. One of the best ways to grow in your knowledge of God's word by heart: "I have hidden your word in my heart, O Lord, and I will not sin against you" (Psalm 119:11). It's not enough to just read and then work on learning that verse even if you know it!

FROM RELIGION TO RELATIONSHIP

The word *religion* can sound cold and stop us from enjoying life. But God wants us to have a relationship with Him, not adherence to a long list of laws and regulations. An abundant life found not in *religion*, but in *relationship* through his son Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. Bible verses that will show you how much God loves you and how much He knows you by you.



tion is difficult for you, be patient. Take your time and reread the passage until its meaning becomes clear.

Application. The third step involves applying the meaning of the passage to your life. Ask the questions, *So what?* and *What difference does this passage make in my life?* When you apply the meaning of the Bible to your life, you will find that the Bible's purpose is to "teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right" (2 Timothy 3:16).

Don't be afraid to underline key statements in your Bible or to make notes. This will help you locate passages that hold special meaning for you. To further your understanding, join a Bible study and share with others interested in knowing more about the Bible.

No doubt you've already read the "How to Know Jesus Personally" section, located a few pages back. If you haven't, take a minute to read it now! It outlines a step-by-step plan to begin a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. One of the best ways to grow in your faith is to learn God's word by heart: "I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you" (Psalm 119:11). It's not that hard to do. Choose a verse and then work on learning that verse every day. It won't be long until you know it!

FROM RELIGION TO RELATIONSHIP

The word *religion* can sound cold and stifling, like a bunch of rules that stop us from enjoying life. But God wants much more with you than stiff adherence to a long list of laws and regulations. He wants you to have an abundant life found not in *religion*, but in a *relationship* with him through his son Jesus Christ and the power of his Spirit. Here are some Bible verses that will show you how much God wants to know and be known by you.

GOD'S LOVE FOR YOU

God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Genesis 1:27

When God created human beings, he made them to be like himself. He created them male and female, and he blessed them and called them "human." Genesis 5:1-2

I am with you, and I will protect you wherever you go. . . . I will not leave you until I have finished giving you everything I have promised you.

Genesis 28:15

When I look at the night sky and see the work of your fingers—the moon and the stars you set in place—what are mere mortals that you should think about them, human beings that you should care for them? Yet you made them only a little lower than God and crowned them with glory and honor. Psalm 8:3-5

You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it.

Psalm 139:13-14

How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered! I can't even count them; they outnumber the grains of sand! And when I wake up, you are still with me!

Psalm 139:17-18

For I hold you by your right hand—I, the LORD your God. And I say to you, "Don't be afraid. I am here to help you." Isaiah 41:13

The LORD gave me this message: "I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb. Before you were born I set you apart."

Jeremiah 1:4-5

What is the price of five sparrows—two copper coins? Yet God does not forget a single one of them. And the very hairs on your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows. Luke 12:6-7

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 3:16

Now you are no longer a slave but God's own child. And since you are his child, God has made you his heir. Galatians 4:7

This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. 1 John 4:10-11

GOD'S FORGIVENESS

If my people who are called by my name pray and seek my face and turn from their evil, I will forgive their sins and cleanse their heart.

2 Chronicles 7:14

Don't keep looking at my sins. Remove them and give me a clean heart, O God. Renew a loyal heart within me, O God.

People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but those who confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy.

I have swept away your sins like a cloud; your guilt is like the morning mist. Oh, return to me now, O Jacob, for I have redeemed you free. Isaiah 44:22

My love will know no bounds, for my anger will be turned away from you.

Hosea 14:4

Listen! We are here to proclaim that through the forgiveness of your sins. Everyone who believes in the Son of God will have eternal life.

Acts 13:38-39

Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Jesus, we will have peace with God because of what Jesus has done for us. . . . And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Jesus, we will certainly save us from all unrighteousness.

Romans 5:1, 9

Because of his grace he declared us righteous and we will inherit eternal life. Titus 3:7

But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Now all glory to God, who is able to keep us from falling, and bring you with great joy into his glorious kingdom.

Jude 1:24

GOD'S DIRECTION

May he grant your heart's desires and make all your plans prosper.

Psalm 20:4

He leads the humble in doing right, teaching them his way, and leads with unfailing love and faithfulness.

and obey his demands. Psalm 25:9-10

Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not lean on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will prosper your ways.

Proverbs 3:5-6

GOD'S FORGIVENESS

If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land.

2 Chronicles 7:14

Don't keep looking at my sins. Remove the stain of my guilt. Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a loyal spirit within me. Psalm 51:9-10
People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy. Proverbs 28:13

I have swept away your sins like a cloud. I have scattered your offenses like the morning mist. Oh, return to me, for I have paid the price to set you free. Isaiah 44:22

My love will know no bounds, for my anger will be gone forever.

Hosea 14:4

Listen! We are here to proclaim that through this man Jesus there is forgiveness for your sins. Everyone who believes in him is declared right with God. Acts 13:38-39

Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. . . . And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation.

Romans 5:1, 9

Because of his grace he declared us righteous and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life. Titus 3:7

But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness. 1 John 1:9

Now all glory to God, who is able to keep you from stumbling and will bring you with great joy into his glorious presence without a single fault. Jude 1:24

GOD'S DIRECTION

May he grant your heart's desires and make all your plans succeed.

Psalms 20:4

He leads the humble in doing right, teaching them his way. The LORD leads with unfailing love and faithfulness all who keep his covenant and obey his demands. Psalm 25:9-10

Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. Proverbs 3:5-6

"For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. In those days when you pray, I will listen. If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me. I will be found by you," says the LORD.

Jeremiah 29:11-14

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me. John 16:13-14

His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him—though he is not far from any one of us. For in him we live and move and exist. As some of your own poets have said, "We are his offspring." Acts 17:27-28

I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called—his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance. Ephesians 1:18

I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. Philippians 4:12-13

But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it. James 1:22-25

GOD'S PROMISE OF HEAVEN

Jesus called a little child to him and put the child among them. Then he said, "I tell you the truth, unless you turn from your sins and become like little children, you will never get into the Kingdom of Heaven.

So anyone who becomes as humble as this little child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven." Matthew 18:2-4

They will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life. Matthew 25:46

There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. And you know the way to where I am going. John 14:2-4

He will wipe every tear from their eyes or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things will be done. Revelation 21:4

GOD'S STRENGTH AND POWER

Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever. Your justice. Psalm 45:6

The LORD says, "I will rescue those who trust in my name. When they call on me in trouble, I will rescue and honor them. I will give them a long life and give them my salvation."

"To whom will you compare me? Who is like me? Look up into the heavens. Who created them like an army, one after another, out of his great power and incomparable strength." Isaiah 40:25-26

LORD, you are my strength and fortress. Nations from around the world will call on your name. Nations left us a foolish heritage, for they have made their own gods. These people make their own gods? These people say, "Now I will show them my power and might. At last they will know and understand." Jeremiah 16:19-21

The LORD your God is living among you. He will take delight in you with gladness. With joy and peace will he lead you, with all who have oppressed you. I will be a father to the fatherless, and a husband to the widow. Zephaniah 3:17, 19

No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him.

GOD'S SON, JESUS CHRIST

In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. He created everything through him, and nothing came into being without him. The Word gave life to everything that was created. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it. John 1:1-5

He came into the very world he created, but his own people did not receive him. He came to his own people, and they did not accept him.



He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.

Revelation 21:4

GOD'S STRENGTH AND POWER

Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever. You rule with a scepter of justice. Psalm 45:6

The LORD says, "I will rescue those who love me. I will protect those who trust in my name. When they call on me, I will answer; I will be with them in trouble. I will rescue and honor them. I will reward them with a long life and give them my salvation." Psalm 91:14-16

"To whom will you compare me? Who is my equal?" asks the Holy One.

Look up into the heavens. Who created all the stars? He brings them out like an army, one after another, calling each by its name. Because of his great power and incomparable strength, not a single one is missing. Isaiah 40:25-26

LORD, you are my strength and fortress, my refuge in the day of trouble!

Nations from around the world will come to you and say, "Our ancestors left us a foolish heritage, for they worshiped worthless idols. Can people make their own gods? These are not real gods at all!" The LORD says, "Now I will show them my power; now I will show them my might. At last they will know and understand that I am the LORD."

Jeremiah 16:19-21

The LORD your God is living among you. He is a mighty savior. He will take delight in you with gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears. He will rejoice over you with joyful songs. . . . I will deal severely with all who have oppressed you. I will save the weak and helpless ones. Zephaniah 3:17, 19

No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him. 1 Corinthians 2:9

GOD'S SON, JESUS CHRIST

In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it. John 1:1-5

He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. But to all

who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from 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 1:10-14

Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see—such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him. He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together. Colossians 1:15-17

You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. Colossians 2:13-14

The Son radiates God's own glory and expresses the very character of God, and he sustains everything by the mighty power of his command. When he had cleansed us from our sins, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God in heaven. Hebrews 1:3
Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Hebrews 13:8

GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT

If you love me, obey my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you. John 14:15-17

But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you. John 14:26

But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.) And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God. The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the

dead, he will give life to your mortal within you. Romans 8:9-11

He has enabled us to be ministers of his not of written laws, but of the Spirit. death; but under the new covenant, th 2 Corinthians 3:6

The Spirit is God's guarantee that he will ised and that he has purchased us to b we would praise and glorify him. Eph

PRAYER—THE GREAT CONVERSATION

A conversation is a two-way event. You speak, prayer works as well. We tell God our thoughts and then we listen to him speak to us through Scripture. One way to pray is to say Scripture to God. For example, you might say, "For Christ, he gave his one and only son, so that if we do not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16, 17). These verses will help you understand something about how to communicate with God, along with some of the best

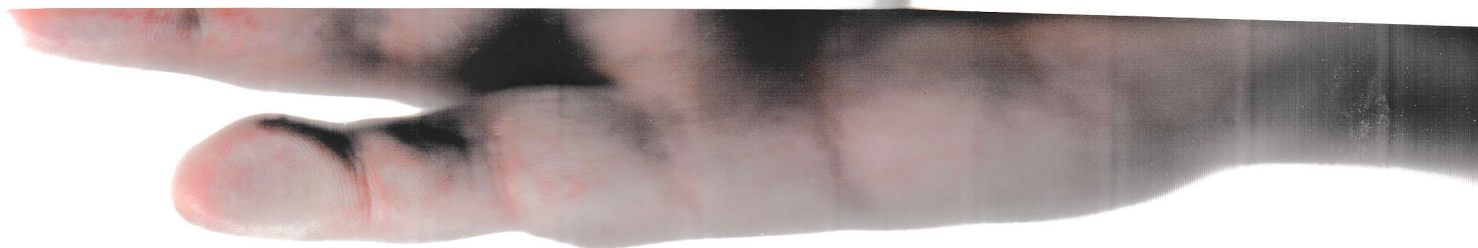
RESPONDING TO GOD

As the deer longs for streams of water, so I long for you, O LORD. But the LORD is in his holy Temple. Let all praise you. Habakkuk 2:20

I will give them hearts that recognize me as their God, and I will be their God, for they have been heartedly. Jeremiah 24:7

The LORD has told you what is good, and he has said to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8

It is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved. Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal. Revelation 3:20



dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you. Romans 8:9-11

He has enabled us to be ministers of his new covenant. This is a covenant not of written laws, but of the Spirit. The old written covenant ends in death; but under the new covenant, the Spirit gives life.

2 Corinthians 3:6

The Spirit is God's guarantee that he will give us the inheritance he promised and that he has purchased us to be his own people. He did this so we would praise and glorify him. Ephesians 1:14

PRAYER—THE GREAT CONVERSATION

A conversation is a two-way event. You speak and you listen. That's how prayer works as well. We tell God our thoughts, our needs, our hopes, and then we listen to him speak to us through his Word and his Spirit. One way to pray is to say Scripture to God, inserting your name in the verse. For example, you might say, "For God loved *Julie* so much that he gave his one and only son, so that if *Julie* believes in him *she* will not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16, personalized). The following verses will help you understand something of what it means to communicate with God, along with some of the benefits.

RESPONDING TO GOD

As the deer longs for streams of water, so I long for you, O God. Psalm 42:1
But the LORD is in his holy Temple. Let all the earth be silent before him.

Habakkuk 2:20

I will give them hearts that recognize me as the LORD. They will be my people, and I will be their God, for they will return to me wholeheartedly. Jeremiah 24:7

The LORD has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8

It is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved. Romans 10:10

Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends.

Revelation 3:20

TALKING WITH GOD

The LORD is close to all who call on him, yes, to all who call on him in truth. He grants the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cries for help and rescues them. Psalm 145:18-19

I will answer them before they even call to me. While they are still talking about their needs, I will go ahead and answer their prayers!

Isaiah 65:24

In those days when you pray, I will listen. If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me. Jeremiah 29:12-13

Ask me and I will tell you remarkable secrets you do not know about things to come. Jeremiah 33:3

But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you. When you pray, don't babble on and on as people of other religions do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. Don't be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him!

Matthew 6:6-8

Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

Matthew 7:7-8

Then Jesus said to the disciples, "Have faith in God. I tell you the truth, you can say to this mountain, 'May you be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' and it will happen. But you must really believe it will happen and have no doubt in your heart. I tell you, you can pray for anything, and if you believe that you've received it, it will be yours."

Mark 11:22-24

Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you. Luke 6:28

But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! John 15:7

I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. 1 Timothy 2:1

Let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most. Hebrews 4:16

Confess your sins to each other, and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results. James 5:16

The eyes of the Lord watch over those who are faithful to their prayers. But the Lord turns his face away from those who are wicked.

1 Peter 3:12

THANKING GOD

Sing praises to God and to his name! Sing to the LORD, who is in the clouds. His name is the LORD—rejoice in him, O people of Israel. He is our fatherless, defender of widows—he is the one who places the lonely in families; he sets the oppressed free in joy. But he makes the rebellious live in sorrow.

Psalm 68:4-6

I will sing of the LORD's unfailing love for ever, for the LORD is faithful. Your unfailing love, O LORD, is as enduring as the heavens.

It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praises to him, for it is good to proclaim your unfailing love in the evening. Psalm 92:1-2

Let everything that breathes sing praises to the LORD. All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He is the Father of all comfort, the Father of the mercies of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is able to give them the same comfort God gives to his angels.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

And give thanks for everything to God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5:20

Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again, let your joy be seen to all men. But when you ask him, be sure that your faith does not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is like a tree with roots that are torn out by the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind.

LISTENING TO GOD

I have not departed from his commands, but I have kept them, and I have not eaten more than daily food. Job 23:12

"Be still, and know that I am God! I will be honored throughout the world. I will be honored throughout the world."

Armies is here among us; the God of Israel is here among us.

Psalm 46:10-11

Fear of the LORD is the foundation of true wisdom. Those who fear him will grow in wisdom. Praise the LORD, O my soul.

The eyes of the Lord watch over those who do right, and his ears are open to their prayers. But the Lord turns his face against those who do evil.

1 Peter 3:12

THANKING GOD

Sing praises to God and to his name! Sing loud praises to him who rides the clouds. His name is the LORD—rejoice in his presence! Father to the fatherless, defender of widows—this is God, whose dwelling is holy. God places the lonely in families; he sets the prisoners free and gives them joy. But he makes the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land.

Psalms 68:4-6

I will sing of the LORD's unfailing love forever! Young and old will hear of your faithfulness. Your unfailing love will last forever. Your faithfulness is as enduring as the heavens. Psalms 89:1-2

It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praises to the Most High. It is good to proclaim your unfailing love in the morning, your faithfulness in the evening. Psalms 92:1-2

Let everything that breathes sing praises to the LORD! Psalms 150:6

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5:20

Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! Philippians 4:4

But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. James 1:6

LISTENING TO GOD

I have not departed from his commands, but have treasured his words more than daily food. Job 23:12

"Be still, and know that I am God! I will be honored by every nation.

I will be honored throughout the world." The LORD of Heaven's Armies is here among us; the God of Israel is our fortress.

Psalms 46:10-11

Fear of the LORD is the foundation of true wisdom. All who obey his commandments will grow in wisdom. Praise him forever! Psalms 111:10

I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

Psalm 119:11

Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are my constant guide. Yes, I have more insight than my teachers, for I am always thinking of your laws. Psalm 119:98-99

Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.

Psalm 119:105

For the LORD grants wisdom! From his mouth come knowledge and understanding. He grants a treasure of common sense to the honest. He is a shield to those who walk with integrity. Proverbs 2:6-7

Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. Proverbs 3:5-6

Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Matthew 7:24

Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand. Mark 4:9

And we have received God's Spirit (not the world's spirit), so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us. When we tell you these things, we do not use words that come from human wisdom. Instead, we speak words given to us by the Spirit, using the Spirit's words to explain spiritual truths. But people who aren't spiritual can't receive these truths from God's Spirit. It all sounds foolish to them and they can't understand it, for only those who are spiritual can understand what the Spirit means.

1 Corinthians 2:12-14

Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives.

Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts.

Colossians 3:16

If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you.

He will not rebuke you for asking. James 1:5

By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence. And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires. In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge. 2 Peter 1:3-5

TELLING OTHERS

I will tell everyone about your righteousness, your saving power, though I am not your mighty deeds, O Sovereign LORD alone are just. Psalm 71:15-16

Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations in the name of the Father and the Son, baptizing them in water. And be sure of this: I am with you always to the end of the age. Matthew 28:19-20

Then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to everyone. Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned."

So never be ashamed to tell others about the Lord. He will strengthen you, and he will give you the power to overcome all your enemies. He will strengthen God gives you, be ready to stand up for the faith. 2 Timothy 1:8

Good News.

Your godly lives will speak to them without words, over by observing your pure and reverent lives.

If someone asks about your Christian hope, be ready to explain it. But do this in a gentle and respectful way.

Then if people speak against you because of the Lord, they see what a good life you live because of the Lord. 1 Peter 3:15-16

CHOOSING JOY AND FINDING PEACE

The abundant life is a life of joy and peace in all circumstances. It's not a life that's problem-free. Of trouble, God is still there for us. He makes a way out of our problems, but we must access them through right thinking and right actions. These Bible verses will help you find joy and peace.

REMEMBERING GOD'S PROMISES

I will bless the LORD who guides me; even at all times the LORD is with me. I will not be afraid, for the LORD is with me. I will be right beside me. Psalm 16:7-8

I will bless the LORD who guides me; even at all times the LORD is with me. I will not be afraid, for the LORD is with me. I will be right beside me. Psalm 16:7-8

TELLING OTHERS

I will tell everyone about your righteousness. All day long I will proclaim your saving power, though I am not skilled with words. I will praise your mighty deeds, O Sovereign LORD. I will tell everyone that you alone are just. Psalm 71:15-16

Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Matthew 28:19-20

Then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone. Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned." Mark 16:15-16

So never be ashamed to tell others about our Lord. And don't be ashamed of me, either, even though I'm in prison for him. With the strength God gives you, be ready to suffer with me for the sake of the Good News. 2 Timothy 1:8

Your godly lives will speak to them without any words. They will be won over by observing your pure and reverent lives. 1 Peter 3:1-2

If someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it. But do this in a gentle and respectful way. Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ. 1 Peter 3:15-16

CHOOSING JOY AND FINDING PEACE

The abundant life is a life of joy and peace, no matter what your circumstances. It's not a life that's problem-free, but even in the midst of trouble, God is still there for us. He makes joy and peace available, but we must access them through right thinking, right attitudes, and right actions. These Bible verses will help you find the pathway to joy and peace.

REMEMBERING GOD'S PROMISES

I will bless the LORD who guides me; even at night my heart instructs me. I know the LORD is always with me. I will not be shaken, for he is right beside me. Psalm 16:7-8

The eyes of the LORD watch over those who do right; his ears are open to their cries for help. . . . The LORD hears his people when they call to him for help. He rescues them from all their troubles.

Psalm 34:15, 17

I waited patiently for the LORD to help me, and he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the pit of despair, out of the mud and the mire. He set my feet on solid ground and steadied me as I walked along. He has given me a new song to sing, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see what he has done and be amazed. They will put their trust in the LORD. Psalm 40:1-3

God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble. So we will not fear when earthquakes come and the mountains crumble into the sea. Psalm 46:1-2

The LORD is good, a strong refuge when trouble comes. He is close to those who trust in him. Nahum 1:7

And now, dear brothers and sisters, we want you to know what will happen to the believers who have died so you will not grieve like people who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him the believers who have died. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14

RIGHT ATTITUDES

Be still in the presence of the LORD, and wait patiently for him to act.

Don't worry about evil people who prosper or fret about their wicked schemes. Psalm 37:7

God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth. . . . God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy. God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God. Matthew 5:5, 7-8

We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. We are perplexed, but not driven to despair. 2 Corinthians 4:8

Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you. Ephesians 4:31-32

Dear brothers and sisters, be patient as you wait for the Lord's return.

Consider the farmers who patiently wait for the rains in the fall and in the spring. They eagerly look for the valuable harvest to ripen. You, too, must be patient. Take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near.

James 5:7-8

HEALTHY THINKING

So be strong and courageous! Do not be discouraged. For the LORD your God will be with you. He will not fail you nor abandon you. In peace I will lie down and sleep, for I am safe. Psalm 4:8

For you are my hiding place; you protect me with songs of victory. Psalm 32:7

Look at those who are honest and good, those who love peace. Psalm 37:37

They do not fear bad news; they are confident and fearless. They are confident and fearless. Psalm 112:7-8

You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in me, who fix their thoughts on me. Isaiah 26:3

Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I will strengthen you and help you. I will put my victorious right hand under your arm. Isaiah 41:10

"But there is no peace for the wicked," says the LORD. God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the sons of God. Matthew 5:9

It is what comes from inside that defiles a person's heart, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, lust, and foolishness. All these vile things can defile you. Mark 7:20-23

Then, turning to his disciples, Jesus said, "Don't worry about everyday life—whether you have enough clothes to wear. For life is more than clothing. Look at the ravens: they don't store food in barns, for God feeds them. Are they not more valuable to him than any birds? Can a man add a moment to his life? And if worry can do that, what's the use of worrying?" Luke 12:22-26

Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in the LORD; there is more than enough room in my Father's house. So, would I have told you that I am going, and you would be sad? When everything is ready, I will come and always be with you where I am. John 14:1-3



HEALTHY THINKING

So be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid and do not panic before them. For the LORD your God will personally go ahead of you. He will neither fail you nor abandon you. Deuteronomy 31:6

In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, O LORD, will keep me safe. Psalm 4:8

For you are my hiding place; you protect me from trouble. You surround me with songs of victory. Psalm 32:7

Look at those who are honest and good, for a wonderful future awaits those who love peace. Psalm 37:37

They do not fear bad news; they confidently trust the LORD to care for them. They are confident and fearless and can face their foes triumphantly. Psalm 112:7-8

You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you! Isaiah 26:3

Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand. Isaiah 41:10

"But there is no peace for the wicked," says the LORD. Isaiah 48:22

God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God. Matthew 5:9

It is what comes from inside that defiles you. For from within, out of a person's heart, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, lustful desires, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. All these vile things come from within; they are what defile you. Mark 7:20-23

Then, turning to his disciples, Jesus said, "That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food to eat or enough clothes to wear. For life is more than food, and your body more than clothing. Look at the ravens. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for God feeds them. And you are far more valuable to him than any birds! Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? And if worry can't accomplish a little thing like that, what's the use of worrying over bigger things?"

Luke 12:22-26

Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me.

There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?

When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. John 14:1-3

I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid.
John 14:27

I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. May the grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. Romans 16:20

Let love be your highest goal! But you should also desire the special abilities the Spirit gives—especially the ability to prophesy. 1 Corinthians 14:1

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! Galatians 5:22-23

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 4:6-7

Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised.

Hebrews 10:36

You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.

Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires.

James 1:19-20

Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you. 1 Peter 5:7

TACKLING TOUGH ISSUES

Sometimes real life isn't pretty, whether you're a Christian or not. The Bible has help for even the hard questions and the worst of life's circumstances, help that will allow you to live the abundant life even in the midst of difficulty. Here are some verses that give guidance for those challenging times and situations.

INJUSTICE

You must not mistreat or oppress foreigners in any way. Remember, you yourselves were once foreigners in the land of Egypt. You must not

exploit a widow or an orphan. If you hear the cry of the poor, if they cry out to me, then I will certainly hear them. Never take advantage of poor and destitute people, fellow Israelites or foreigners living in your land. Pay them their wages each day before sunset, because they are poor and counting on it. If you don't, they might cry out against you and it would be counted against you. The LORD is a shelter for the oppressed,

Psalm 9:9

LORD, you know the hopes of the helpless. Do not silence them, and comfort them. You will bring justice for the oppressed, so mere people can no longer oppress them.

The LORD replies, "I have seen violence and suffering. I have heard the groans of the poor. Now I will answer them. I have longed for me to do." Psalm 12:5

It is better to be godly and have little than to be rich and have many. A person who gets ahead by oppressing the poor will end in poverty. Proverbs 22:7

Enjoy prosperity while you can, but when it is gone, do not grieve, for both come from God. Remember that I have seen everything in this meaning, and I know that the end of good young people and the long life of the righteous is short.

Ecclesiastes 7:14-15

Human pride will be brought down, and only the LORD will be exalted on high. Only the LORD of Heaven's Armies has a day of reckoning, and he will bring down the proud and mighty and bring down every high fortification. Isaiah 2:11-12

Those who are honest and fair, who refuse to be bribed, who refuse to listen to the words of the wicked, who shut their eyes to all enticement to sin, who will dwell on high. The rocks of the fortress will be thrown down, and the tower will be brought down. Food will be supplied to them, and they will not be ashamed. Dance. Isaiah 33:15-16

What sorrow awaits you who build big houses, who build high towers, who build cities with money gained through oppression. You believe your wealth will buy you safety, that you will be safe from disaster. . . . What sorrow awaits you who build cities with money gained through oppression. The LORD of Heaven's Armies promises that they will turn to ashes? Habakkuk 2:9, 12-13

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exploit a widow or an orphan. If you exploit them in any way and they cry out to me, then I will certainly hear their cry. Exodus 22:21-23
Never take advantage of poor and destitute laborers, whether they are fellow Israelites or foreigners living in your towns. You must pay them their wages each day before sunset because they are poor and are counting on it. If you don't, they might cry out to the LORD against you, and it would be counted against you as sin. Deuteronomy 24:14-15
The LORD is a shelter for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

Psalms 9:9

LORD, you know the hopes of the helpless. Surely you will hear their cries and comfort them. You will bring justice to the orphans and the oppressed, so mere people can no longer terrify them. Psalm 10:17-18
The LORD replies, "I have seen violence done to the helpless, and I have heard the groans of the poor. Now I will rise up to rescue them, as they have longed for me to do." Psalm 12:5

It is better to be godly and have little than to be evil and rich. Psalm 37:16
A person who gets ahead by oppressing the poor or by showering gifts on the rich will end in poverty. Proverbs 22:16

Enjoy prosperity while you can, but when hard times strike, realize that both come from God. Remember that nothing is certain in this life. I have seen everything in this meaningless life, including the death of good young people and the long life of wicked people.

Ecclesiastes 7:14-15

Human pride will be brought down, and human arrogance will be humbled. Only the LORD will be exalted on that day of judgment. For the LORD of Heaven's Armies has a day of reckoning. He will punish the proud and mighty and bring down everything that is exalted.

Isaiah 2:11-12

Those who are honest and fair, who refuse to profit by fraud, who stay far away from bribes, who refuse to listen to those who plot murder, who shut their eyes to all enticement to do wrong—these are the ones who will dwell on high. The rocks of the mountains will be their fortress. Food will be supplied to them, and they will have water in abundance. Isaiah 33:15-16

What sorrow awaits you who build big houses with money gained dishonestly! You believe your wealth will buy security, putting your family's nest beyond the reach of danger. . . . What sorrow awaits you who build cities with money gained through murder and corruption! Has not the LORD of Heaven's Armies promised that the wealth of nations will turn to ashes? Habakkuk 2:9, 12-13

"At that time I will put you on trial. I am eager to witness against all sorcerers and adulterers and liars. I will speak against those who cheat employees of their wages, who oppress widows and orphans, or who deprive the foreigners living among you of justice, for these people do not fear me," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. "I am the LORD, and I do not change. That is why you descendants of Jacob are not already destroyed. Ever since the days of your ancestors, you have scorned my decrees and failed to obey them. Now return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. Malachi 3:5-7

But because you are stubborn and refuse to turn from your sin, you are storing up terrible punishment for yourself. For a day of anger is coming, when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. He will judge everyone according to what they have done. He will give eternal life to those who keep on doing good, seeking after the glory and honor and immortality that God offers. Romans 2:5-7

What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else? Romans 8:31-32

And I saw a great white throne and the one sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from his presence, but they found no place to hide. I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God's throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books. Revelation 20:11-12

LONELINESS

Even if my father and mother abandon me, the LORD will hold me close. Psalm 27:10

But you are a tower of refuge to the poor, O LORD, a tower of refuge to the needy in distress. You are a refuge from the storm and a shelter from the heat. Isaiah 25:4

Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand. Isaiah 41:10

"For the mountains may move and the hills disappear, but even then my faithful love for you will remain. My covenant of blessing will never be broken," says the LORD, who has mercy on you. Isaiah 54:10

No, I will not abandon you as orphans—I will come to you. John 14:18

The first time I was brought before the judge, no one came with me.

Everyone abandoned me. May it not be said that the LORD stood with me and gave me strength. Good News in its entirety for all the world, to bring me from certain death. 2 Timothy 4:16-17

PREJUDICE

Be perfectly fair in your decisions and impartial in the cases of those who are poor as well as those who are rich. Deuteronomy 1:16-17

Then Peter replied, "I see very clearly that God shows no partiality. Every nation he accepts those who fear him and do what is right." Acts 10:34-35

There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:28

My dear brothers and sisters, how can you show partiality? The glorious Lord Jesus Christ if you favor the rich over the poor. For example, suppose someone comes into your assembly who is wearing fine clothes and gold jewelry, and another who is wearing dirty clothes. If you give special respect to the rich person, but you say to the poor person, "Stand there, or else sit there on the floor"—well, that shows that your judgments are guided by appearances. James 2:1-9

SICKNESS

The LORD nurses them when they are sick and cares for them when they are ill. Psalm 41:3

Remember your promise to me; it is my only hope. Do not let me be disappointed, O LORD, for my soul is in trouble. My heart is faint, and my eyes are dim. My soul is in the hands of the living, O LORD, if you heal me, I will be truly healed and my soul will be truly saved. My praises are for you alone. Psalm 108:1-5

"I will give you back your health and heal your wounds, O LORD, for my soul is in trouble. My heart is faint, and my eyes are dim. My soul is in the hands of the living, O LORD, if you heal me, I will be truly healed and my soul will be truly saved. My praises are for you alone." Jeremiah 30:17

Jesus called his twelve disciples together and gave them authority to cast out evil spirits and to heal every kind of disease and sickness. Matthew 10:1

"Abba, Father," he cried out, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I will do whatever you want." Mark 14:36

God works in different ways, but it is the same Spirit who gives gifts to each of us. A spiritual gift is given to each of us. 1 Corinthians 12:4-6

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SICKNESS

The LORD nurses them when they are sick and cares for them when they are ill. Psalm 41:3

Remember your promise to me; it is my only hope. Do not let me be disappointed, O LORD, for you are my God. Do not let me be disappointed, O LORD, for you are my God. Do not let me be disappointed, O LORD, for you are my God. Psalm 119:49-50

O LORD, if you heal me, I will be truly healed, for you are my God. Truly saved. My praises are for you alone, O LORD, for you have healed me. Psalm 107:1-2

"I will give you back your health and heal all your wounds." Jeremiah 30:17

Jesus called his twelve disciples together and gave them authority to cast out evil spirits and to heal every kind of disease and sickness. Matthew 10:1

"Abba, Father," he cried out, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I will do whatever you want." Mark 14:36

God works in different ways, but it is the same God who works in all of us. A spiritual gift is given to each of us. 1 Corinthians 12:4-6

Everyone abandoned me. May it not be counted against them. But the Lord stood with me and gave me strength so that I might preach the Good News in its entirety for all the Gentiles to hear. And he rescued me from certain death. 2 Timothy 4:16-17

PREJUDICE

Be perfectly fair in your decisions and impartial in your judgments. Hear the cases of those who are poor as well as those who are rich.

Deuteronomy 1:16-17

Then Peter replied, "I see very clearly that God shows no favoritism. In every nation he accepts those who fear him and do what is right."

Acts 10:34-35

There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:28

My dear brothers and sisters, how can you claim to have faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ if you favor some people over others? For example, suppose someone comes into your meeting dressed in fancy clothes and gold jewelry, and another comes in who is poor and dressed in dirty clothes. If you give special attention and a good seat to the rich person, but you say to the poor one, "You can stand over there, or else sit there on the floor"—well, doesn't this discrimination show that your judgments are guided by evil motives? James 2:1-4

SICKNESS

The LORD nurses them when they are sick and restores them to health.

Psalms 41:3

Remember your promise to me; it is my only hope. Your promise revives me; it comforts me in all my troubles. Psalm 119:49-50

O LORD, if you heal me, I will be truly healed; if you save me, I will be truly saved. My praises are for you alone! Jeremiah 17:14

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my inheritance; therefore, I will hope in him!" The LORD is good to those who depend on him, to those who search for him. So it is good to wait quietly for salvation from the LORD.

Lamentations 2:11; 3:22-26

"God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way. . . . But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike." Matthew 5:10-12, 44-45

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it. And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul?" Matthew 16:24-26

Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die." John 11:25-26

Then Jesus wept. The people who were standing nearby said, "See how much he [Jesus] loved him!" John 11:35-36

What we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. Romans 8:18

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. For the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ. Even when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your comfort and salvation! For when we ourselves are comforted, we will certainly comfort you. Then you can patiently endure the same things we suffer. We are confident that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in the comfort God gives us.

2 Corinthians 1:3-7

We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. We are perplexed, but not driven to despair. We are hunted down, but never

abandoned by God. We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed. Through suffering, our bodies continue to share in the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be seen in our bodies. Yes, we live under constant danger of death because we serve Jesus, so that the life of Jesus will be evident in our dying bodies. So we live in the face of death, but this has resulted in eternal life for you.

2 Corinthians 4:8-12

We have been beaten, been put in prison, faced angry mobs, worked to exhaustion, endured sleepless nights, and gone without food. . . . We serve God whether people honor us or despise us, whether they slander us or praise us. We are honest, but they call us impostors. We are ignored, even though we are well known. We live close to death, but we are still alive. We have been beaten, but we have not been killed. Our hearts ache, but we always have joy. We are poor, but we give spiritual riches to others. We own nothing, and yet we have everything.

2 Corinthians 6:5, 8-10

These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. 1 Peter 1:7

TEMPTATION

But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint. Isaiah 40:31

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light." Matthew 11:28-30

The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure. 1 Corinthians 10:13

Don't lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old sinful nature and all its wicked deeds. Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him.

Colossians 3:9-10

Since he himself has gone through suffering and testing, he is able to help us when we are being tested. Hebrews 2:18

God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who

love him. And remember, when you are tempted, do not say, "God is tempting me." God is never tempted by anyone, and he does not tempt anyone else. . . . So humble yourselves before the Lord; oppose the devil, and he will flee from you. James 1:13-15

ABUNDANT LIVING

The abundant life is life as God meant it to be. In heaven, we won't experience perfection. But by drawing on the endless supply of God's love and life in Christ, we can have what we need for this life and live life to its fullest by living it with God. We are accessing God's plentiful resources.

A LIFE OF PURPOSE

"I will bless you . . . and you will be a blessing to many." "Who knows if perhaps you were made for this?" Esther 4:14

"For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord, "plans to give you a future and hope. I will give you a good and not for disaster, to give you a future and hope. When you pray, I will listen. If you seek me, you will find me." Jeremiah 29:11-13

Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, for if you do, you will find all that your heart desires. Luke 12:31

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. To be a living sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will learn to know God's will, which is good and pleasing and perfect. Romans 12:1-2

In his grace, God has given us different gifts. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out what you believe as you are moved by the Spirit. If you have faith, use it. If you have the gift of love, use it well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If you have the gift of encouraging, do it as you build up others. If you have the gift of leadership ability, take the responsibility for showing kindness to others, do it as you



love him. And remember, when you are being tempted, do not say, "God is tempting me." God is never tempted to do wrong, and he never tempts anyone else. . . . So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. James 1:12-13; 4:7

ABUNDANT LIVING

The abundant life is life as God meant it to be. Of course, this side of heaven, we won't experience perfection or an end to difficulty. But by drawing on the endless supply of God's resources made available to us in Christ, we can have what we need for any and every situation. We can live life to its fullest by living it with God. These verses will guide you in accessing God's plentiful resources.

A LIFE OF PURPOSE

"I will bless you . . . and you will be a blessing to others." Genesis 12:2

"Who knows if perhaps you were made queen for just such a time as this?" Esther 4:14

"For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. In those days when you pray, I will listen. If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me." Jeremiah 29:11-13

Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and he will give you everything you need. Luke 12:31

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. Romans 12:1-2

In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly. Don't just pretend to

love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. Romans 12:6-10

Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will reward each one of us for the good we do, whether we are slaves or free. Ephesians 6:7-8

Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are serving is Christ. Colossians 3:23-24

Dear friend, you are being faithful to God when you care for the traveling teachers who pass through, even though they are strangers to you.

They have told the church here of your loving friendship. Please continue providing for such teachers in a manner that pleases God.

3 John 1:5-6

A LIFE OF FAITH AND WISDOM

Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are my constant guide. Yes, I have more insight than my teachers, for I am always thinking of your laws. Psalm 119:98-99

Don't turn your back on wisdom, for she will protect you. Love her, and she will guard you. Getting wisdom is the wisest thing you can do! And whatever else you do, develop good judgment. If you prize wisdom, she will make you great. Embrace her, and she will honor you. She will place a lovely wreath on your head; she will present you with a beautiful crown. Proverbs 4:6-9

Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock. But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn't obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash. Matthew 7:24-27

Then Jesus told them, "I tell you the truth, if you have faith and don't doubt, you can do things like this and much more. You can even say to this mountain, 'May you be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' and it will happen. You can pray for anything, and if you have faith, you will receive it." Matthew 21:21-22

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
God's masterpiece. He has created us
do the good things he planned for us to
So be careful how you live. Don't live like
wise. Make the most of every opportunity.
Ephesians 5:15-16*

Let your roots grow down into him, and then your faith will grow strong in the Lord. Then you will overflow with thankfulness. For if we are faithful to the end, trusting the Lord who first believed, we will share in all that he has promised. So do not throw away this confident trust

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If you need wisdom, ask our generous God

*If you need wisdom, ask our generous God,
He will not rebuke you for asking. But
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James 1:5-7

*If you are wise and understand God's ways
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A LIFE WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

*But Ruth replied, "Don't ask me to leave you
you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will
my people, and your God will be my God.
Does anyone want to live a life that is long a
your tongue from speaking evil and your l*

things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago. Ephesians 2:8-10
So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days.

Ephesians 5:15-16

Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him.

Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness. Colossians 2:7

For if we are faithful to the end, trusting God just as firmly as when we first believed, we will share in all that belongs to Christ. Hebrews 3:14

So do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord. Remember the great reward it brings you! Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised. "For in just a little while, the Coming One will come and not delay. And my righteous ones will live by faith. But I will take no pleasure in anyone who turns away." Hebrews 10:35-38

If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you.

He will not rebuke you for asking. But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. James 1:5-7

If you are wise and understand God's ways, prove it by living an honorable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you are bitterly jealous and there is selfish ambition in your heart, don't cover up the truth with boasting and lying. For jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and demonic. For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind. But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere. James 3:13-17

A LIFE WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

But Ruth replied, "Don't ask me to leave you and turn back. Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God." Ruth 1:16

Does anyone want to live a life that is long and prosperous? Then keep your tongue from speaking evil and your lips from telling lies! Turn

away from evil and do good. Search for peace, and work to maintain it. The eyes of the LORD watch over those who do right; his ears are open to their cries for help. Psalm 34:12-15

Walk with the wise and become wise; associate with fools and get in trouble. Proverbs 13:20

A friend is always loyal, and a brother is born to help in time of need. Proverbs 17:17

There are "friends" who destroy each other, but a real friend sticks closer than a brother. Proverbs 18:24

Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace. For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future.

Ephesians 4:2-4

And further, submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. For wives this means submit to your husbands as to the Lord. . . . For husbands this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word. He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault. In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man who loves his wife actually shows love for himself. . . . Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do. "Honor your father and mother." This is the first commandment with a promise: If you honor your father and mother, "things will go well for you, and you will have a long life on the earth." Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.

Ephesians 5:21-22, 25-28; 6:1-4

Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Philippians 2:3-5

But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language. Don't lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old sinful nature and all its wicked deeds. Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him. Colossians 3:8-10

But we don't need to write to you about other, for God himself has taught you. 1 Thessalonians 4:9

But those who won't care for their relationship with God, have denied the true faith. . . . unbelievers. 1 Timothy 5:8

Keep on loving each other as brothers and sisters, with genuine hospitality to strangers, for some who are strangers are angels without realizing it! Remember to love one another as you love yourselves. Remember also those who are in prison for the sake of the Lord, and their pain in your own bodies. Hebrews 13:1-2

In the same way, the tongue is a small thing, but it boasts great things. But a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire.

For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there will be disorder and evil of every kind. But where there is peace and love, there will be purity. It is also peace loving, gentle, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and kindness, and it is without favoritism and is always sincere. And it will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of peace. James 3:16-18

In the same way, you wives must accept the Lord as the head of the church, just as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the savior. Then, even if some refuse to obey the Lord, the church will speak to them without any words. They will be renewed in the heart, as your pure and reverent lives. . . . In the same way, you wives, as the church submits to Christ, so you must submit to the Lord. Give honor to your wives, just as the church gives honor to Christ. Treat your wives as you treat the church, so that you can bring her to the place of holiness, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind. She may be weaker than you, but she is the church, the body of Christ, which he saved with his blood. Treat her as the church, so that you can bring her to the place of holiness, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind. Her prayers will not be hindered. 1 Peter 3:1-7

Keep your conscience clear. Then if people are reproaching you for Christ, you will not be ashamed when they see what a good person you are. Remember, it is better to suffer for doing good than for doing nothing. For Christ died for us, to redeem us from all iniquity, to purify himself for himself a peculiar people, zealous of good deeds. He never sinned, but he suffered for us, that he might bring us safely home to God. He suffered and died for us, that he might raise us to life with himself in the Spirit. 1 Peter 3:16-18

If someone says, "I love God," but hates a brother or sister, that person is a liar; for if we don't love people whom we can see, how can we love God, whom we cannot see? And those who love God must also love their brothers and sisters. 1 John 4:20-21

Those who love God must also love their brothers and sisters. 1 John 4:20-21

But we don't need to write to you about the importance of loving each other, for God himself has taught you to love one another.

1 Thessalonians 4:9

But those who won't care for their relatives, especially those in their own household, have denied the true faith. Such people are worse than unbelievers. 1 Timothy 5:8

Keep on loving each other as brothers and sisters. Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it! Remember those in prison, as if you were there yourself. Remember also those being mistreated, as if you felt their pain in your own bodies. Hebrews 13:1-3

In the same way, the tongue is a small thing that makes grand speeches. But a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire. James 3:5

For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind. But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere. And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness.

James 3:16-18

In the same way, you wives must accept the authority of your husbands. Then, even if some refuse to obey the Good News, your godly lives will speak to them without any words. They will be won over by observing your pure and reverent lives. . . . In the same way, you husbands must give honor to your wives. Treat your wife with understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are, but she is your equal partner in God's gift of new life. Treat her as you should so your prayers will not be hindered. 1 Peter 3:1-2, 7

Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak evil against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ. Remember, it is better to suffer for doing good, if that is what God wants, than to suffer for doing wrong! Christ suffered for our sins once for all time. He never sinned, but he died for sinners to bring you safely home to God. He suffered physical death, but he was raised to life in the Spirit. 1 Peter 3:16-18

If someone says, "I love God," but hates a Christian brother or sister, that person is a liar; for if we don't love people we can see, how can we love God, whom we cannot see? And he has given us this command: Those who love God must also love their Christian brothers and sisters.

1 John 4:20-21

A LIFE WITH RIGHT PRIORITIES

Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you your heart's desires.

Psalm 37:4

Teach us to realize the brevity of life, so that we may grow in wisdom.

Psalm 90:12

Teach me your decrees, O LORD; I will keep them to the end. Give me understanding and I will obey your instructions; I will put them into practice with all my heart. Make me walk along the path of your commands, for that is where my happiness is found. Psalm 119:33-35

Take a lesson from the ants, you lazybones. Learn from their ways and become wise! . . . But you, lazybones, how long will you sleep? When will you wake up? A little extra sleep, a little more slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest—then poverty will pounce on you like a bandit; scarcity will attack you like an armed robber. Proverbs 6:6, 9-11

Lazy people don't even cook the game they catch, but the diligent make use of everything they find. Proverbs 12:27

For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven.

Ecclesiastes 3:1

Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. Matthew 6:33

Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. Ephesians 5:16-17

Make it your goal to live a quiet life, minding your own business and working with your hands, just as we instructed you before. Then people who are not Christians will respect the way you live, and you will not need to depend on others. 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

Await the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will bring you eternal life.

In this way, you will keep yourselves safe in God's love. Jude 1:21

A LIFE OF SERVING OTHERS

It is a sin to belittle one's neighbor; blessed are those who help the poor.

Proverbs 14:21

Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed. Yes, speak up for the poor and helpless, and see that they get justice. Proverbs 31:8-9

Give to those who ask, and don't turn away from those who want to borrow. Matthew 5:42

Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home.

I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was in prison, and you visited me.

Do to others as you would like them to do to you, who love you, why should you get credit? Even those who love them! And if you do good to you, why should you get credit? Even you lend money only to those who can repay you, why should you get credit? Even sinners will lend to other your enemies! Do good to them. Lend them, and they will repay you. Then your reward from heaven will be truly be acting as children of the Most High, for they are unthankful and wicked. You must love your Father, for he is compassionate. Luke 6:31-36

Invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. For the Father of the righteous, God will reward them, for they have not repaid you. Luke 14:13-14

If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraged by them, and encourage them generously. If God has given you leadership, lead seriously. And if you have a gift of love, do it gladly. Don't just pretend to love, but love what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is true, and hold it with genuine affection, and take delight in it. Romans 12:8-10

So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and steadfast, and rejoice enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that the Lord is ever useless. 1 Corinthians 15:58

So let's not get tired of doing what is good, for we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up. If we have the opportunity, we should do good to all, especially those in the family of faith. Galatians 6:9-10

Don't look out only for your own interests, but also for the interests of others. Philippians 2:4

I have learned how to be content with whatever I am, whether I have much or little, to live on almost nothing or with everything, to live in every situation, whether it is with plenty or little. Philippians 4:11-12

Since God chose you to be the holy people, let yourselves be transformed by tenderhearted mercy, kindness, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other as the Lord has forgiven you, who offend you. Remember, the Lord forgives you.

I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me." Matthew 25:34-36

Do to others as you would like them to do to you. If you love only those who love you, why should you get credit for that? Even sinners love those who love them! And if you do good only to those who do good to you, why should you get credit? Even sinners do that much! And if you lend money only to those who can repay you, why should you get credit? Even sinners will lend to other sinners for a full return. Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid. Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for he is kind to those who are unthankful and wicked. You must be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate. Luke 6:31-36

Invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. Then at the resurrection of the righteous, God will reward you for inviting those who could not repay you. Luke 14:13-14

If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly. Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. Romans 12:8-10

So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless. 1 Corinthians 15:58

So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up. Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith. Galatians 6:9-10

Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. Philippians 2:4

I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. Philippians 4:11-12

Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive

others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful. Colossians 3:12-15

I am praying that you will put into action the generosity that comes from your faith as you understand and experience all the good things we have in Christ. Your love has given me much joy and comfort, my brother, for your kindness has often refreshed the hearts of God's people. Philemon 1:6-7

And don't forget to do good and to share with those in need. These are the sacrifices that please God. Hebrews 13:16

Finally, all of you should be of one mind. Sympathize with each other.

Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude. 1 Peter 3:8

If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God's love be in that person?

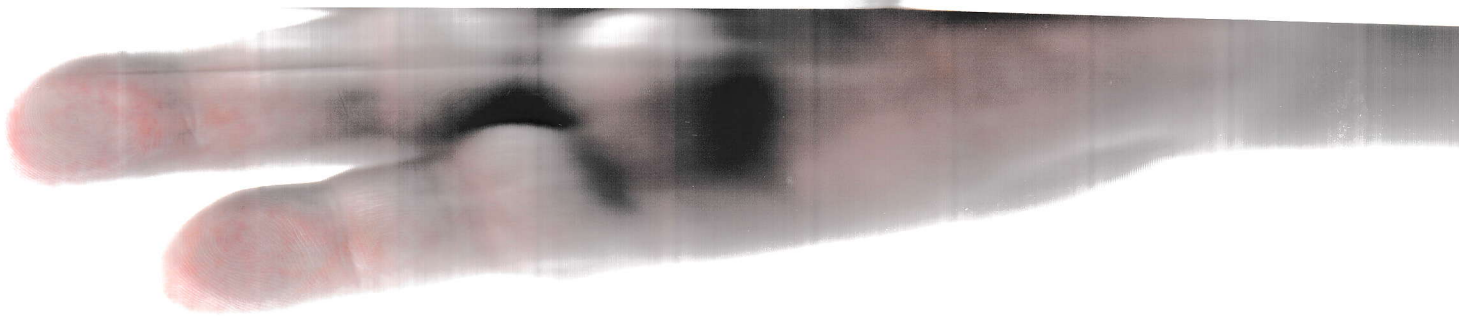
1 John 3:17

A NO

The *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, was first became one of the most popular Bible translations. While the NLT's influence was rapidly growing, the translators determined that an additional investment in scholarship could make it even better. So shortly after its initial release, an eight-year process with the purpose of increasing accuracy without sacrificing its easy-to-understand quality. The process was completed in 2004 and is reflected in this edition. An additional update with minor changes was submitted in 2013.

The goal of any Bible translation is to convey the meaning of the ancient Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts as accurately as possible to modern readers. The challenge for our translators was to communicate as clearly and powerfully to today's readers as the original texts did to the people of the Bible. The result is a translation that is both accurate and easy to understand, while also accurately communicating the original biblical texts. The NLT is a general-purpose translation, suitable for both personal reading and reading aloud in worship services.

We believe that the New Living Translation—which combines the best of biblical scholarship with a clear, dynamic writing style—will be a blessing to all who read it. We publish it with the prayer that it will bring the timeless truth to the church and the world in a fresh way.



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A NOTE TO READERS

The *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, was first published in 1996. It quickly became one of the most popular Bible translations in the English-speaking world. While the NLT's influence was rapidly growing, the Bible Translation Committee determined that an additional investment in scholarly review and text refinement could make it even better. So shortly after its initial publication, the committee began an eight-year process with the purpose of increasing the level of the NLT's precision without sacrificing its easy-to-understand quality. This second-generation text was completed in 2004 and is reflected in this edition of the New Living Translation. An additional update with minor changes was subsequently introduced in 2007.

The goal of any Bible translation is to convey the meaning and content of the ancient Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts as accurately as possible to contemporary readers. The challenge for our translators was to create a text that would communicate as clearly and powerfully to today's readers as the original texts did to readers and listeners in the ancient biblical world. The resulting translation is easy to read and understand, while also accurately communicating the meaning and content of the original biblical texts. The NLT is a general-purpose text especially good for study, devotional reading, and reading aloud in worship services.

We believe that the New Living Translation—which combines the latest biblical scholarship with a clear, dynamic writing style—will communicate God's word powerfully to all who read it. We publish it with the prayer that God will use it to speak his timeless truth to the church and the world in a fresh, new way.

The Publishers
October 2007

INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW LIVING TRANSLATION

Translation Philosophy and Methodology

English Bible translations tend to be governed by one of two general translation theories. The first theory has been called "formal-equivalence," "literal," or "word-for-word" translation. According to this theory, the translator attempts to render each word of the original language into English and seeks to preserve the original syntax and sentence structure as much as possible in translation. The second theory has been called "dynamic-equivalence," "functional-equivalence," or "thought-for-thought" translation. The goal of this translation theory is to produce in English the closest natural equivalent of the message expressed by the original-language text, both in meaning and in style.

Both of these translation theories have their strengths. A formal-equivalence translation preserves aspects of the original text—including ancient idioms, term consistency, and original-language syntax—that are valuable for scholars and professional study. It allows a reader to trace formal elements of the original-language text through the English translation. A dynamic-equivalence translation, on the other hand, focuses on translating the message of the original-language text. It ensures that the meaning of the text is readily apparent to the contemporary reader. This allows the message to come through with immediacy, without requiring the reader to struggle with foreign idioms and awkward syntax. It also facilitates serious study of the text's message and clarity in both devotional and public reading.

The pure application of either of these translation philosophies would create translations at opposite ends of the translation spectrum. But in reality, all translations contain a mixture of these two philosophies. A purely formal-equivalence translation would be unintelligible in English, and a purely dynamic-equivalence translation would risk being unfaithful to the original. That is why translations shaped by

dynamic-equivalence theory are usually quite literal when the original text is relatively clear, and the translations shaped by formal-equivalence theory are sometimes quite dynamic when the original text is obscure.

The translators of the New Living Translation set out to render the message of the original texts of Scripture into clear, contemporary English. As they did so, they kept the concerns of both formal-equivalence and dynamic-equivalence in mind. On the one hand, they translated as simply and literally as possible when that approach yielded an accurate, clear, and natural English text. Many words and phrases were rendered literally and consistently into English, preserving essential literary and rhetorical devices, ancient metaphors, and word choices that give structure to the text and provide echoes of meaning from one passage to the next.

On the other hand, the translators rendered the message more dynamically when the literal rendering was hard to understand, was misleading, or yielded archaic or foreign wording. They clarified difficult metaphors and terms to aid in the reader's understanding. The translators first struggled with the meaning of the words and phrases in the ancient context; then they rendered the message into clear, natural English. Their goal was to be both faithful to the ancient texts and eminently readable. The result is a translation that is both exegetically accurate and idiomatically powerful.

Translation Process and Team

To produce an accurate translation of the Bible into contemporary English, the translation team needed the skills necessary to enter into the thought patterns of the ancient authors and then to render their ideas, connotations, and effects into clear, contemporary English. To begin this process, qualified biblical scholars were needed to interpret the meaning of the original text and to check it against our base English translation. In order to guard against personal and theological biases, the scholars needed to represent a diverse group of Evangelicals who would employ the best exegetical tools. Then to work alongside the scholars, skilled English stylists were needed to shape the text into clear, contemporary English.

With these concerns in mind, the Bible Translation Committee recruited teams of scholars that represented a broad spectrum of denominations, theological perspectives, and backgrounds within the worldwide Evangelical community. (These scholars are listed at the end of this introduction.) Each book of the Bible was assigned to three different scholars with proven expertise in the book or group of books to be reviewed. Each of these scholars made a thorough review of a base translation and submitted suggested revisions to the appropriate Senior Translator. The Senior Translator then reviewed and summarized these suggestions and proposed a first-draft revision of the base text. This draft served as the basis for several additional phases of exegetical and stylistic committee review. Then the Bible Translation Committee jointly reviewed and approved every verse of the final translation.

Throughout the translation and editing process, the Senior Translators and their scholar teams were given a chance to review the editing done by the team of stylists. This ensured that exegetical errors would not be introduced late in the process and that the entire Bible Translation Committee was happy with the final result. By choosing a team of qualified scholars and skilled stylists and by setting up a process that allowed their interaction throughout the process, the New Living Translation has been refined to preserve the essential formal elements of the original biblical texts, while also creating a clear, understandable English text.

The New Living Translation was first published in 1971. Since that time, the Bible Translation Committee has reviewed and refined the translation. The purpose of this second edition was to increase the level of precision without sacrificing readability. This second-edition text was completed in 2007. Changes were subsequently introduced in 2007. The translation reflects the updated 2007 text.

Written to Be Read Aloud

It is evident in Scripture that the biblical documents were often in public worship (see Nehemiah 8; Luke 1:3). It is still the case today that more people hear the Word of God in church than are likely to read it for themselves. The goal for the NLT translators, not only to facilitate communication with clarity and power when it is read aloud, but also to ensure that it would be excellent for private reading and powerful impact on any listener.

The Texts behind the New Living Translation

The Old Testament translators used the Masoretic Text, as presented in *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (1977), and the Septuagint; this is an update of Rudolf Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica*. The translators also further compared the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Syriac Peshitta, and any other versions or manuscripts that shed light on the original text.

The New Testament translators used the two main Greek texts: the *Greek New Testament*, published by the United Bible Societies (fourth revised edition, 1993), and *Novum Testamentum Graecum* (NA, twenty-seventh edition, 1993). These texts differ in punctuation and textual notes, but they are in modern textual scholarship. However, in cases where early evidence supported the decision, the translators followed the UBS and NA Greek texts and followed variant readings. Significant textual variants of this sort are noted in the New Living Translation.

Translation Issues

The translators have made a conscious effort to produce a translation that is understood by the typical reader of modern English. They used only vocabulary and language structures in common use in English, with the goal of making the New Living Translation timeless as possible.

But our concern for readability goes beyond the words and sentence structure. We are also concerned about historical and cultural context, and we have sought to translate the Bible in ways that can be immediately understood.

The New Living Translation was first published in 1996. Shortly after its initial publication, the Bible Translation Committee began a process of further committee review and translation refinement. The purpose of this continued revision was to increase the level of precision without sacrificing the text's easy-to-understand quality. This second-edition text was completed in 2004, and an additional update with minor changes was subsequently introduced in 2007. This printing of the New Living Translation reflects the updated 2007 text.

Written to Be Read Aloud

It is evident in Scripture that the biblical documents were written to be read aloud, often in public worship (see Nehemiah 8; Luke 4:16-20; 1 Timothy 4:13; Revelation 1:3). It is still the case today that more people will hear the Bible read aloud in church than are likely to read it for themselves. Therefore, a new translation must communicate with clarity and power when it is read publicly. Clarity was a primary goal for the NLT translators, not only to facilitate private reading and understanding, but also to ensure that it would be excellent for public reading and make an immediate and powerful impact on any listener.

The Texts behind the New Living Translation

The Old Testament translators used the Masoretic Text of the Hebrew Bible as represented in *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (1977), with its extensive system of textual notes; this is an update of Rudolf Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica* (Stuttgart, 1937). The translators also further compared the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Septuagint and other Greek manuscripts, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Syriac Peshitta, the Latin Vulgate, and any other versions or manuscripts that shed light on the meaning of difficult passages.

The New Testament translators used the two standard editions of the Greek New Testament: the *Greek New Testament*, published by the United Bible Societies (UBS, fourth revised edition, 1993), and *Novum Testamentum Graece*, edited by Nestle and Aland (NA, twenty-seventh edition, 1993). These two editions, which have the same text but differ in punctuation and textual notes, represent, for the most part, the best in modern textual scholarship. However, in cases where strong textual or other scholarly evidence supported the decision, the translators sometimes chose to differ from the UBS and NA Greek texts and followed variant readings found in other ancient witnesses. Significant textual variants of this sort are always noted in the textual notes of the New Living Translation.

Translation Issues

The translators have made a conscious effort to provide a text that can be easily understood by the typical reader of modern English. To this end, we sought to use only vocabulary and language structures in common use today. We avoided using language likely to become quickly dated or that reflects only a narrow subdialect of English, with the goal of making the New Living Translation as broadly useful and timeless as possible.

But our concern for readability goes beyond the concerns of vocabulary and sentence structure. We are also concerned about historical and cultural barriers to understanding the Bible, and we have sought to translate terms shrouded in history and culture in ways that can be immediately understood. To this end:

- We have converted ancient weights and measures (for example, “ephah” [a unit of dry volume] or “cubit” [a unit of length]) to modern English (American) equivalents, since the ancient measures are not generally meaningful to today’s readers. Then in the textual footnotes we offer the literal Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek measures, along with modern metric equivalents.
- Instead of translating ancient currency values literally, we have expressed them in common terms that communicate the message. For example, in the Old Testament, “ten shekels of silver” becomes “ten pieces of silver” to convey the intended message. In the New Testament, we have often translated the “denarius” as “the normal daily wage” to facilitate understanding. Then a footnote offers: “Greek a *denarius*, the payment for a full day’s wage.” In general, we give a clear English rendering and then state the literal Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek in a textual footnote.
- Since the names of Hebrew months are unknown to most contemporary readers, and since the Hebrew lunar calendar fluctuates from year to year in relation to the solar calendar used today, we have looked for clear ways to communicate the time of year the Hebrew months (such as Abib) refer to. When an expanded or interpretive rendering is given in the text, a textual note gives the literal rendering. Where it is possible to define a specific ancient date in terms of our modern calendar, we use modern dates in the text. A textual footnote then gives the literal Hebrew date and states the rationale for our rendering. For example, Ezra 6:15 pinpoints the date when the postexilic Temple was completed in Jerusalem: “the third day of the month Adar.” This was during the sixth year of King Darius’s reign (that is, 515 B.C.). We have translated that date as March 12, with a footnote giving the Hebrew and identifying the year as 515 B.C.
- Since ancient references to the time of day differ from our modern methods of denoting time, we have used renderings that are instantly understandable to the modern reader. Accordingly, we have rendered specific times of day by using approximate equivalents in terms of our common “o’clock” system. On occasion, translations such as “at dawn the next morning” or “as the sun was setting” have been used when the biblical reference is more general.
- When the meaning of a proper name (or a wordplay inherent in a proper name) is relevant to the message of the text, its meaning is often illuminated with a textual footnote. For example, in Exodus 2:10 the text reads: “The princess named him Moses, for she explained, ‘I lifted him out of the water.’” The accompanying footnote reads: “*Moses* sounds like a Hebrew term that means ‘to lift out.’”

Sometimes, when the actual meaning of a name is clear, that meaning is included in parentheses within the text itself. For example, the text at Genesis 16:11 reads: “You are to name him Ishmael (*which means ‘God hears’*), for the LORD has heard your cry of distress.” Since the original hearers and readers would have instantly understood the meaning of the name “Ishmael,” we have provided modern readers with the same information so they can experience the text in a similar way.

- Many words and phrases carry a great deal of cultural meaning that was obvious to the original readers but needs explanation in our own culture. For example, the phrase “they beat their breasts” (Luke 23:48) in ancient times

meant that people were very upset, often chose to translate this phrase dynamically as *sorrow*.” Then we included a footnote with “Greek *went home beating their breasts*.”

have sometimes chosen to illuminate the immediately understandable. For example, the literal Greek phrase to read: “They went . . . If we had done this, we would not have . . . literal Greek clearly appears in translation.

- Metaphorical language is sometimes difficult to understand, so at times we have chosen to use a metaphor. For example, the ancient phrase “tower of David” (Song of Songs 4:4). We have rendered it as “*beautiful as the tower of David*” to clarify the simile. Another example comes in Ecclesiastes 5:6: “Remember him . . . when the days are few, and the women who look through the window rendered it: “Remember him before your eyes stop grinding; and before your eyes—the windows—see dimly.” We clarified such metaphors so the reader might be confused by the literal text.
- When the content of the original language is poetic, we rendered it in English poetic form. We sought to preserve and highlight the relationships between phrases. Often uses parallelism, a literary form where a phrase (often a third or fourth) echoes the initial phrase. In parallelism, the subsequent parallel phrase repeats and sharpening, the thought expressed in the first phrase. If possible, we sought to represent these parallelisms in English.
- The Greek term *hoi Ioudaioi* is literally translated as “the Jews” in most translations. In the Gospel of John, however, it refers to the Jewish people generally. In some contexts, it refers to Jewish religious leaders. We have attempted to represent different contexts by using terms such as “the Jewish people” or “the religious leaders.”
- One challenge we faced was how to translate a text that was originally written in a context that was used to refer to humanity generally. We needed to represent an ancient context while also trying to make the text understandable to an audience that tends to read male-oriented language. Often the original text, though using masculine language, intends that the message be applied to both men and women. This is found in the New Testament letters, where Paul addresses “brothers” (*adelphoi*). Yet it is clear from the context that he was addressed to all the believers—male and female. We translated this Greek word as “brothers and sisters” to represent the historical situation more accurately.

meant that people were very upset, often in mourning. In our translation we chose to translate this phrase dynamically for clarity: "They went home *in deep sorrow*." Then we included a footnote with the literal Greek, which reads: "Greek *went home beating their breasts*." In other similar cases, however, we have sometimes chosen to illuminate the existing literal expression to make it immediately understandable. For example, here we might have expanded the literal Greek phrase to read: "They went home beating their breasts *in sorrow*." If we had done this, we would not have included a textual footnote, since the literal Greek clearly appears in translation.

- Metaphorical language is sometimes difficult for contemporary readers to understand, so at times we have chosen to translate or illuminate the meaning of a metaphor. For example, the ancient poet writes, "Your neck is *like* the tower of David" (Song of Songs 4:4). We have rendered it "Your neck is as *beautiful as* the tower of David" to clarify the intended positive meaning of the simile. Another example comes in Ecclesiastes 12:3, which can be literally rendered: "Remember him . . . when the grinding women cease because they are few, and the women who look through the windows see dimly." We have rendered it: "Remember him before your teeth—your few remaining servants—stop grinding; and before your eyes—the women looking through the windows—see dimly." We clarified such metaphors only when we believed a typical reader might be confused by the literal text.
- When the content of the original language text is poetic in character, we have rendered it in English poetic form. We sought to break lines in ways that clarify and highlight the relationships between phrases of the text. Hebrew poetry often uses parallelism, a literary form where a second phrase (or in some instances a third or fourth) echoes the initial phrase in some way. In Hebrew parallelism, the subsequent parallel phrases continue, while also furthering and sharpening, the thought expressed in the initial line or phrase. Whenever possible, we sought to represent these parallel phrases in natural poetic English.
- The Greek term *hoi Ioudaioi* is literally translated "the Jews" in many English translations. In the Gospel of John, however, this term doesn't always refer to the Jewish people generally. In some contexts, it refers more particularly to the Jewish religious leaders. We have attempted to capture the meaning in these different contexts by using terms such as "the people" (with a footnote: Greek *the Jewish people*) or "the religious leaders," where appropriate.
- One challenge we faced was how to translate accurately the ancient biblical text that was originally written in a context where male-oriented terms were used to refer to humanity generally. We needed to respect the nature of the ancient context while also trying to make the translation clear to a modern audience that tends to read male-oriented language as applying only to males. Often the original text, though using masculine nouns and pronouns, clearly intends that the message be applied to both men and women. A typical example is found in the New Testament letters, where the believers are called "brothers" (*adelphoi*). Yet it is clear from the content of these letters that they were addressed to all the believers—male and female. Thus, we have usually translated this Greek word as "brothers and sisters" in order to represent the historical situation more accurately.

We have also been sensitive to passages where the text applies generally to human beings or to the human condition. In some instances we have used plural pronouns (they, them) in place of the masculine singular (he, him). For example, a traditional rendering of Proverbs 22:6 is: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." We have rendered it: "Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it." At times, we have also replaced third person pronouns with the second person to ensure clarity. A traditional rendering of Proverbs 26:27 is: "He who digs a pit will fall into it, and he who rolls a stone, it will come back on him." We have rendered it: "If you set a trap for others, you will get caught in it yourself. If you roll a boulder down on others, it will crush you instead."

We should emphasize, however, that all masculine nouns and pronouns used to represent God (for example, "Father") have been maintained without exception. All decisions of this kind have been driven by the concern to reflect accurately the intended meaning of the original texts of Scripture.

Lexical Consistency in Terminology

For the sake of clarity, we have translated certain original-language terms consistently, especially within synoptic passages and for commonly repeated rhetorical phrases, and within certain word categories such as divine names and non-theological technical terminology (e.g., liturgical, legal, cultural, zoological, and botanical terms). For theological terms, we have allowed a greater semantic range of acceptable English words or phrases for a single Hebrew or Greek word. We have avoided some theological terms that are not readily understood by many modern readers. For example, we avoided using words such as "justification" and "sanctification," which are carryovers from Latin translations. In place of these words, we have provided renderings such as "made right with God" and "made holy."

The Spelling of Proper Names

Many individuals in the Bible, especially the Old Testament, are known by more than one name (e.g., Uzziah/Azariah). For the sake of clarity, we have tried to use a single spelling for any one individual, footnoting the literal spelling whenever we differ from it. This is especially helpful in delineating the kings of Israel and Judah. King Joash/Jehoash of Israel has been consistently called Jehoash, while King Joash/Jehoash of Judah is called Joash. A similar distinction has been used to distinguish between Joram/Jehoram of Israel and Joram/Jehoram of Judah. All such decisions were made with the goal of clarifying the text for the reader. When the ancient biblical writers clearly had a theological purpose in their choice of a variant name (e.g., Eshbaal/Ishbosheth), the different names have been maintained with an explanatory footnote.

For the names Jacob and Israel, which are used interchangeably for both the individual patriarch and the nation, we generally render it "Israel" when it refers to the nation and "Jacob" when it refers to the individual. When our rendering of the name differs from the underlying Hebrew text, we provide a textual footnote, which includes this explanation: "The names 'Jacob' and 'Israel' are often interchanged throughout the Old Testament, referring sometimes to the individual patriarch and sometimes to the nation."

The Rendering of Divine Names

All appearances of 'el, 'elohim, or 'eloah have the context demands the translation "god(s)." The tetragrammaton (YHWH) consistently as "the LORD," which is common among English translations. When 'adonai, which we render "Lord." When 'adonai have rendered it "Sovereign LORD." This also in cases where YHWH appears with 'elohim, which (the short form of YHWH) and YHWH appears as "GOD." When YHWH appears with the term tsaba "Heaven's Armies" to translate the meaning of the transliteration, *Yahweh*, when the people invoked in contrast to another divine name or title, see Exodus 3:15; 6:2-3).

In the New Testament, the Greek word *christos* when the context assumes a Jewish audience. When assumed, *christos* has been translated as "Christ," except that it is translated text explicitly quotes from the Old Testament in capitals.

Textual Footnotes

The New Living Translation provides several footnotes in the text with an asterisk:

- When for the sake of clarity the NLT rendering phrase dynamically, we generally give a footnote. This allows the reader to see the rendering and how our translation relates to the original. Textual footnotes are prefaced with "Hebrew," "Aramaic," or "Greek" to indicate the language of the underlying source text. For example, the literal "breaking of bread" (from the Greek) clarifies that this verse refers to the ceremonial meal, not just an ordinary meal. Then we attach a footnote, which reads: "Greek *the breaking of bread*."
- Textual footnotes are also used to show alternate readings of the text. The word "Or." These normally occur for passages where the meaning is debated. On occasion, we also provide footnotes that represent a departure from long-standing traditional renderings. For example, "serious skin disease" at Leviticus 13:2 is translated as "leprosy." The Hebrew word used throughout the Old Testament for various skin diseases.
- When our translators follow a textual variant from the standard Hebrew or Greek texts (listed earlier in the introduction), we include a footnote. We also footnote cases where a variant is included in the Greek text known as the *Textus Receptus* but is not included in the King James Version.

The Rendering of Divine Names

All appearances of 'el, 'elohim, or 'eloah have been translated "God," except where the context demands the translation "god(s)." We have generally rendered the tetragrammaton (YHWH) consistently as "the LORD," utilizing a form with small capitals that is common among English translations. This will distinguish it from the name 'adonai, which we render "Lord." When 'adonai and YHWH appear together, we have rendered it "Sovereign LORD." This also distinguishes 'adonai YHWH from cases where YHWH appears with 'elohim, which is rendered "LORD God." When YH (the short form of YHWH) and YHWH appear together, we have rendered it "LORD GOD." When YHWH appears with the term *tseba'oth*, we have rendered it "LORD of Heaven's Armies" to translate the meaning of the name. In a few cases, we have utilized the transliteration, *Yahweh*, when the personal character of the name is being invoked in contrast to another divine name or the name of some other god (for example, see Exodus 3:15; 6:2-3).

In the New Testament, the Greek word *christos* has been translated as "Messiah" when the context assumes a Jewish audience. When a Gentile audience can be assumed, *christos* has been translated as "Christ." The Greek word *kurios* is consistently translated "Lord," except that it is translated "LORD" wherever the New Testament text explicitly quotes from the Old Testament, and the text there has it in small capitals.

Textual Footnotes

The New Living Translation provides several kinds of textual footnotes, all designated in the text with an asterisk:

- When for the sake of clarity the NLT renders a difficult or potentially confusing phrase dynamically, we generally give the literal rendering in a textual footnote. This allows the reader to see the literal source of our dynamic rendering and how our translation relates to other more literal translations. These notes are prefaced with "Hebrew," "Aramaic," or "Greek," identifying the language of the underlying source text. For example, in Acts 2:42 we translated the literal "breaking of bread" (from the Greek) as "the Lord's Supper" to clarify that this verse refers to the ceremonial practice of the church rather than just an ordinary meal. Then we attached a footnote to "the Lord's Supper," which reads: "Greek *the breaking of bread*."
- Textual footnotes are also used to show alternative renderings, prefaced with the word "Or." These normally occur for passages where an aspect of the meaning is debated. On occasion, we also provide notes on words or phrases that represent a departure from long-standing tradition. These notes are prefaced with "Traditionally rendered." For example, the footnote to the translation "serious skin disease" at Leviticus 13:2 says: "Traditionally rendered *leprosy*. The Hebrew word used throughout this passage is used to describe various skin diseases."
- When our translators follow a textual variant that differs significantly from our standard Hebrew or Greek texts (listed earlier), we document that difference with a footnote. We also footnote cases when the NLT excludes a passage that is included in the Greek text known as the *Textus Receptus* (and familiar to readers through its translation in the King James Version). In such cases, we

offer a translation of the excluded text in a footnote, even though it is generally recognized as a later addition to the Greek text and not part of the original Greek New Testament.

- All Old Testament passages that are quoted in the New Testament are identified by a textual footnote at the New Testament location. When the New Testament clearly quotes from the Greek translation of the Old Testament, and when it differs significantly in wording from the Hebrew text, we also place a textual footnote at the Old Testament location. This note includes a rendering of the Greek version, along with a cross-reference to the New Testament passage(s) where it is cited (for example, see notes on Psalms 8:2; 53:3; Proverbs 3:12).
- Some textual footnotes provide cultural and historical information on places, things, and people in the Bible that are probably obscure to modern readers. Such notes should aid the reader in understanding the message of the text. For example, in Acts 12:1, "King Herod" is named in this translation as "King Herod Agrippa" and is identified in a footnote as being "the nephew of Herod Antipas and a grandson of Herod the Great."
- When the meaning of a proper name (or a wordplay inherent in a proper name) is relevant to the meaning of the text, it is either illuminated with a textual footnote or included within parentheses in the text itself. For example, the footnote concerning the name "Eve" at Genesis 3:20 reads: "Eve sounds like a Hebrew term that means 'to give life.'" This wordplay in the Hebrew illuminates the meaning of the text, which goes on to say that Eve "would be the mother of all who live."

AS WE SUBMIT this translation for publication, we recognize that any translation of the Scriptures is subject to limitations and imperfections. Anyone who has attempted to communicate the richness of God's Word into another language will realize it is impossible to make a perfect translation. Recognizing these limitations, we sought God's guidance and wisdom throughout this project. Now we pray that he will accept our efforts and use this translation for the benefit of the church and of all people.

We pray that the New Living Translation will overcome some of the barriers of history, culture, and language that have kept people from reading and understanding God's Word. We hope that readers unfamiliar with the Bible will find the words clear and easy to understand and that readers well versed in the Scriptures will gain a fresh perspective. We pray that readers will gain insight and wisdom for living, but most of all that they will meet the God of the Bible and be forever changed by knowing him.

*The Bible Translation Committee
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