

# "How To Buy a Bible"

"And some other related things" by John Karmelich (johnkar@ix.netcom.com)



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dozens of English Translations?</li> <li>• "Devotional" Bibles?</li> <li>• "Study" Bibles?</li> <li>• "Official" Bibles?</li> <li>• "Red Letter" Bibles?</li> <li>• "Giant Print" Bibles?</li> <li>• Literal vs. Paraphrase Bibles?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commentaries?</li> <li>• Concordances?</li> <li>• Lexicons?</li> <li>• Study Guides?</li> <li>• Audio Bibles?</li> <li>• On-Line Bibles?</li> <li>• Bible Computer Software?</li> </ul> |
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"This book will keep you from sin & sin will keep you from this book" Swedish Proverb

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"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2nd Timothy 3:16-17)

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"Next to praying there is nothing so important in practical religion as Bible-reading. God has mercifully given us a book which is "able to make [us] wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2nd Timothy 3:15). By reading that book we may learn what to believe, what to be, and what to do; how to live with comfort, and how to die in peace. Happy is that man who possesses a Bible! Happier still is he who reads it! Happiest of all is he who not only reads it, but obeys it, and makes it the rule of his faith and practice!" J. C. Ryle (1816-1900)

## Top Ten Bestselling Bibles in 2010 (Christian Booksellers Association)

1) New International Version (last revised 2011)	6) Reina Valera (Spanish) 1960
2) New Living Translation (last revised 2007)	7) Holman Christian Standard Bible (last revised 2004)
3) King James Version (1611)	8) The Message (2002)
4) The New King James Versions (1982)	9) The International Reader's Version (2008)
5) The English Standard Version (2001)	10) New American Standard (last revised 2001)

## A Pretty Complete list of (available) English Translated Bibles:

(AAT) The Complete Bible: An American Translation,	(MKJV) Modern King James Version
(ABT) The Afro Bible Translation	(NKJV) New King James Version
(ATB) The Alternate Translation Bible	(RKJV) Revised King James New Testament
(ASV) American Standard Version	(TMB) The Third Millennium Bible
(AB) The Amplified Bible	(LITV) The Literal Translation of the Holy Bible
(ALT) Analytical-Literal Translation	(LB) Living Bible
(ASL) American Sign Language Translation	(MLB) Modern Language Bible aka: New Berkeley Version
(AV) Authorized Version (same as KJV)	(NAB) New American Bible (A Catholic Bible)
(Bar) The William Barclay New Testament:	(NASB) New American Standard Bible
(BWE) Bible in WorldWide English	(NASB95) New American Standard Bible 1995 edition
(CE) The Common Edition: New Testament	(NCV) New Century Version
(CJB) Complete Jewish Bible	(NEB) New English Bible
(CEV) Contemporary English Version	(NET) New English Translation aka (REB) The Revised English Bible
(Dar) Darby Bible	(NET) New Evangelical Translation
(DR) Douay-Rheims	(NirV) New International Reader's Version
(DRP) David Robert Palmer's Gospels translation	(NIV) New International Version
(ERV) Easy-to-Read Version	(NJB) New Jerusalem Bible (Catholic Bible)
(ESV) English Standard Version	(NLV) New Life Version
(FF) Ferrar Fenton Bible	(NLT) New Living Translation
(GLW) God's Living Word	(NRSV) New Revised Standard Bible
(GNC) God's New Covenant: A N.T. Translation	(NWT) New World Translation (Jehovah's Witnesses)
(GW) God's Word	(OBP) The Original Bible Project
(GNB) Good News Bible aka (TEV) Today's English Version	(PMB) Postmodern Bible - Amos
(HCSB) Holman Christian Standard Bible	(RSV) Revised Standard Version
(ICB) International Children's Bible (children's version of the NCV)	(Sch) The Schocken Bible
(IRV) International Readers' Version	(TM) The Message
(ISV) The International Standard Version	(TMB) The Third Millennium Bible
(JBP) New Testament in Modern English, by J.B. Phillips	(TEV) Today's English Version
(JNT) Jewish New Testament: A Translation of the New Testament That Expresses Its Jewishness	(Wuest) The New Testament: An Expanded Translation
(JPS) Jerusalem Publication Society: Jewish Publication - Old Testament	(Wey) Weymouth Bible
(KJV) King James Version	(WEB) World English Bible
(DKJB) Defined King James Bible	(WNT) Wesley's New Testament
(KJ21) King James for the 21st Century	(YLT) Young's Literal Translation of the Bible
(KJ2000) King James 2000	(YW)Yes Word

This list was taken from a web site in around 2002. That web site is not available.  
Some additions have been made to this list. Not all of the bibles on this list are still in print.

- Paperback?
- Hard-back?
- Soft Leather?
- Hard Leather?
- Bible Cover?
- Electronic Version
- With commentary notes or without commentary notes?
- Which commentary notes would you like with which version?
- Would you like the giant print edition for those with vision issues?
- Would you like the very small print version that fits in your pocket?
- How about a Red-Letter edition where Jesus' words are in highlighted in red?
- How about bibles for your IPOD, phone, computer or electronic book reader?

**Oh, and what color would you like that in?**

## Favorite Web Links for Electronic Bibles and Software

### Favorite On-Line Bibles

These Web sites have multiple versions of the Bible one can read and study for free. If you are thinking of a buying a particular translation, you can study that translation on most of these web sites. Each of these sites also have good links to commentaries & other study-helps.

1. Biblegateway.com <http://www.biblegateway.com/> (I've been using this the most as of late.)
2. The "Blue Letter Bible" <http://www.blueletterbible.org/>
3. The "On-Line" Bible Study <http://bible.crosswalk.com/>
4. The "World Wide Study Bible" (Wheaton College) <http://www.ccel.org/wwsb/>

### Favorite online locations for ordering Bibles & Bible Software

1. Discount Christian Software & Books Phone 888-967-3763 <http://www.discountchristian.com/> (This company is based on San Diego based. I've had good dealing with them. - John)
2. Consistent Computing Bargains Inc. Bible and General Software Only - No Books (Wisconsin based. "Really good prices/service" - John) Toll Free: 800-342-4222 <http://www.ccbnonprofits.com/>
3. Christian Book.com: <http://www.christianbook.com/> Good company, lots of bible books, software, etc.
4. Family Christian: [www.familychristian.com](http://www.familychristian.com). They used to be in Long Beach (less than a mile from our church). The store is gone , but they still have a good online site with lots of Christian books and software.

### Bible Software Companies

These are the "Top 5". Note that first two (Logos and Quickverse) sell more than all the others put together. There are many others. There is also a lot of software just for "Bible-help", such as maps, commentaries, dictionaries, etc.) These companies sell software with multiple translations available, commentaries, built in search capabilities, etc. Most of these companies offer free trial versions of their software. Rule of thumb: "The more you pay, the more translations and features you receive." Typical Prices: \$75-\$350. Most Christian Bookstores have a good section of Bible software & carry these titles. Most of the money is used to pay for the copyrights of the authors that are tied to those packages.

The great advantage of using bible software is quick access to lots of data. I can quickly look up verses in lots of translations and get lots of bible help and support that come with these packages.

1. Logos Software [www.logos.com](http://www.logos.com) (Maker of "Nelson Electronic Bible" and various "Library" Editions, also publishes New American Standard Bible Library, many others), KJV, NKJV, NASB "oriented"). This company is the leader in bible software. Their web site has lots of data and links to books that can be purchased or used with their software.
2. "The Learning Company" [www.quickverse.com](http://www.quickverse.com) (Maker of "QuickVerse" & many titles, QuickVerse is not tied to any one publisher, so it is not lean toward any particular translation) I've been using QuickVerse for years. I still have their software package on my computers.
3. Zondervan Publishing <http://www.zondervan.com> (Big publisher, lots of titles NIV oriented.)
4. Word Search (Nav. Press) <http://www.wordsearchbible.com/> (Haven't tried it, no recommendation.)
5. Bibleworks <http://www.bibleworks.com/> (Haven't tried it, no recommendation.)

Favorite web site to study and review bible software: Christian Computing Magazine. [www.ccmag.com](http://www.ccmag.com)

## A Brief History of the English Versions of the Bible<sup>i</sup>

- 1) 6<sup>th</sup> Century AD - Missionaries from Rome
  - a) Brought the Latin Vulgate Translated by Monks from Latin to English
  - b) Various translations were made in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Century
  - c) "English" as we know it, was very different from this language (prior to Normandy Invasion)
  - d) No "complete" Bible was ever translated (as discovered)
- 2) 13<sup>th</sup> Century AD - John Wycliffe (1329-1384) (a.k.a. "Wycliffe Bible")
  - a) First to translate entire Latin Bible to English
  - b) Taught doctrines opposed by the Catholic Church (no purgatory, no "indulgences", et.al.)
  - c) Although the Roman Catholic Church couldn't stop him, after his death, he was condemned for heresy, his grave was dug up and body burned (as a warning to others!)
- 3) 15<sup>th</sup> Century AD - William Tyndale (a.k.a. "Tyndale" Bible)
  - a) The first to translate directly from the Greek into English. (He did a New Testament-only).
  - b) Was banned from England by the Catholic Church. He worked out of Germany.
  - c) 15,000 copies, in six editions were smuggled into England between 1525-1530
  - d) Affiliated with Calvin and Reformation. Wrote commentaries with Calvin's ideas.
  - e) In 1536 he was imprisoned, and burned at the stake by a Pro-Roman Catholic England
- 4) 15<sup>th</sup> Century AD - Mike Coverdale (a.k.a. "Coverdale" Bible)
  - a) Student of Tyndale at Cambridge.
  - b) Finished Wycliffe's work. Translated Old Testament from Hebrew to English.
  - c) In 1537, King Henry VIII, broke ties with the Pope, and endorsed this Bible. The same King Henry was the one who earlier sentenced Tyndale to death for his translation.
- 5) 1538-1540 John Rogers (a.k.a. "The Great Bible")
  - a) First Bible Authorized for public use by the King.
  - b) It was given its name because of its large size and print.
- 6) 1568 "The Geneva Bible"
  - a) It was made for English exiles in Geneva (to escape Roman Church persecution)
  - b) Acknowledged as a little superior to the Great Bible, it was not as well accepted in England due to its commentary that was very "Calvinistic."
- 7) 1611 King James Bible (a.k.a. "King James" or "Authorized Version")
  - a) James VI of Scotland became King James I of England.
  - b) He invited "factions" of Church of England (Anglicans) and Puritans to reconcile differences. This was unsuccessful
  - c) King James authorized a version of the Bible they could *both* use. No "commentaries" allowed. It was called the "Authorized" version as it was endorsed by the King.
  - d) 50 Hebrew & Greek scholars worked as a committee on the translation.
  - e) It was the most popular translation of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries. It was written in "common English" (as opposed to formal English). The word usage was far less than Shakespeare.
  - f) The manuscripts were based on studying copies of existing scrolls found through Rome, Mid-East, etc. Minor differences between the scrolls/books were settled by a "majority rules" , where the final version was based majority of the texts.
  - g) It is also known as "Textus Receptus" or "Received Text".
  - h) Problems of King James. It was Greek manuscripts dating from 10<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Also the understanding of ancient Hebrew has improved since this time. They also lacked complete scrolls of Revelation in the Greek, and used the Latin Vulgate.

## A Brief History of the English Versions of the Bible (cont.)

- 8) 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Discoveries of older Greek manuscripts (Codex = "scrolls")
- "Codex Alexandrinus" A 5<sup>th</sup> Century Greek New Testament was brought to England.
  - "Codex Sinaiticus" was found in St. Catherine's Monastery (Israel). Dated 350 AD
  - "Codex Vaticanus" from the Vatican library, public release 1481, Dated 320 AD
  - "Pro-King James" scholars argue that these manuscripts originated from Alexandria, Egypt, the home of a great library. They make arguments of the superiority of the "Textus Receptus" (received text) is superior based on its geographical location.
  - "Is the King James the best translation?" debate has been going on for a long time.
  - There are good "pundits" on both sides. This is very "heated" debate among scholars.  
For more on this debate: Here are two books on both sides of this date.
    - "The King James Only Controversy : Can You Trust the Modern Translations? by James R. White (Bethany House; ISBN: 1556615752)
    - Which Bible? by David Otis Fuller (Inst. for Biblical Textual Studies; ISBN: 0944355242, (This is a "Pro-King James Only" Book. - John)
- 9) 1871-1872 The "English Revised Version" and American Standard Version (1901)
- Use of "older" scrolls were used to write new versions.
  - Differences between these versions/King James were minor.
  - Most Modern Bibles, like these foot-noted where a word or phrase was included/not included in these versions vs. Textus Receptus
  - No significant doctrinal differences between these versions. Mostly "scholastic debate".
- 10) 19<sup>th</sup> Century - New Archeology Discoveries/New Translations
- thousands of scrolls discovered in Egypt dating between 2<sup>nd</sup> Cent. BC -3<sup>rd</sup> AD
  - Discovery that most of the New Testament was written in common Greek (called "Koine") as opposed to "Formal Greek"
    - Newer translations took these factors into account.
  - Translations called "The Complete Bible An American Translation (1935)
  - The Revised Standard Version
    - Took the English Revised Version and paraphrased to make it "smoother".
- 11) 20<sup>th</sup> Century - Discovery of Dead Sea Scrolls
- A library of scrolls hidden in caves near the Dead Sea. The parchment texts, wrapped in linen and stored in pottery jars, were hidden in the first century AD and recovered between 1947 and 1956, at which time they became known as the Dead Sea Scrolls. This is earliest known Hebrew copies of Old Testament texts.
  - The 20<sup>th</sup> Century and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century has seen an "explosion" of new English translations. Most of these translations take into account all of the evidence we have include the Dead Sea Scrolls. Modern English translations range from literal to paraphrased.
- 12) A quick comment on modern Roman Catholic Bibles
- 1943 - Pope Pius XII issued a decree encouraging Catholics to read and study the Bible
  - 1966 The Jerusalem Bible. First Catholic Bible translated from original languages to English
  - 1970 The New American Bible. Includes official Catholic commentary on the bible.

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<sup>i</sup>History of the English Bible by Phillip Comfort, from the book "The Origin of the Bible", Tyndale Publishers 1992.