

Holy Bible  
Modern Literal Version  
New Testament  
2017 Update  
(February 1, 2018)

(The Open Source Bible Translation)  
*(The world's most accurate English translation.)*

NOTES: There is only one master copy which caters to electronic formats since electronic downloads are 1000 to 1 the book sales, so please excuse various formatting issues. In addition in many instances, we threw out traditional ways of doing things for methods that work better.

If you are in a country in which English is not the primary language, we have a special MLV version just for you. Please contact us at [mlvbible@gmail.com](mailto:mlvbible@gmail.com) if you would like to print and distribute the MLV locally in your own country (royalty free). We want all Christians to have the world's most accurate English Bible available to them and couldn't care less about money.

Presented to:

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By:

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### Simple Reading Schedule

This is a simple reading schedule that is designed to be followed for 20 minutes a day over a 2-month period. Empty your mind. Read God's Word like a child would for the first time. Never read it with preconceived ideas or thoughts or to prove something. Don't try to understand everything. Note what you don't understand and move on. Reread those notes later and they may make more sense. Remember to pray. This arrangement is for better understanding by letting books build on each other. It is arranged roughly in chronological order. Use Sundays to catch up on days you could not spend 20 minutes with the Word of God. If you have never read the Bible, always start with the New Testament. The New Testament is what you will be judged by, not the Old Testament. Never read the Old Testament and New Testament together that is too confusing even for the mature Christian. Spend the first Monday reading the Preface and other non-bible sections to familiarize yourself with the MLV's style of translation.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Mark 1-3	Mark 4-7	Mark 8-11	Mark 12-14	Mark 15-Matthew 4
Matthew 5-8	Matthew 9-12	Matthew 13-16	Matthew 17-21	Matthew 22-25	Matthew 26-28
John 1-4	John 5-7	John 8-11	John 12-16	John 17-21	Luke 1-3
Luke 4-7	Luke 8-10	Luke 11-14	Luke 15-18	Luke 19-21	Luke 22-24
Acts 1-4	Acts 5-8	Acts 9-12	Acts 13-16	Acts 17-20	Acts 21-24
Acts 25-28	James 1-5	1Th-2Th	Galatians 1-6	1Cor 1-8	1Cor 9-15
1Cor 16 - 2Cor 6	2Cor 7-13	Rom 1-5	Rom 6-11	Rom 12-16	Ephesians 1-6
Philippians 1-4	Colossians 1-4	1Pet-2Peter	Jude - 1Tim 4	1Tim 5- Heb 2	Hebrews 3-9
Hebrews 10-13	1 John - 3 John	Revelation 1-3	Revelation 4-9	Revelation 10-14	Revelation 15-20
Revelation 21-22					

To read the New Testament as the events happened, go to Mark 1 and follow the [{Harmony of the New Covenant}](#) sections.

You should read the Modern Literal Version once all the way through and do not use any other translation during this time. The MLV's strongest feature is its consistency in translating the Greek into the same English word every time. By using another translation during this time you will not be able to learn from this uniformity. Then you too will understand why 90% of the emails to us are 'I have learned so much just reading the MLV once,' or similar.

# Holy Bible

## Modern Literal Version

### New Testament

#### 2017 Update

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We are not here to make money and we will entertain requests for any items not listed below.

1. The purpose of a Copyright is to prevent others from claiming a Copyright and subsequently altering the text.
2. When quoting the Modern Literal Version, the quotes are to be noted by Modern Literal Version or MLV. Footnoting larger amounts is totally acceptable.
3. This translation may be used in any Bible commentary, study module, tract, class book, or similar study materials as long as it is noted according to the guidelines above, and the MLV's part does not exceed 80% of the volume of the total project; so 'have at it.' Essentially, you may quote 6,300 verses without permission. (Contact us, and we will be happy to assist you in the completion of your project.)
4. After 80% you are prohibited from selling the Copyrighted MLV! Are you aware of violations? Please let us know.
5. Incorporation of the MLV into a computer-generated software format(s), or any web database of bible versions, is permissible, provided that you have initiated a request to do so in writing (email is fine) and that the MLV is free in these programs. Should you violate our restrictions, and sell your product or charge fees for the MLV, any MLV modules must be removed from the product. If you find any software or module that is not linked from our main website, they are probably dated and consider the files there as altered, pirated or may potentially contain spyware.
6. The HTML version and search engine can be reproduced on other web sites but requires permission. (There are too many old copies of the MLV around and we would like to have those updated.)
7. Createspace.com, an on-demand publishing company, (link below) is the current publisher of the Modern Literal Version printed edition and has been since Oct. 2013. Please, whenever possible, buy directly from them (more of your money stays in the USA.)
8. The authorized Kindle edition is available only from amazon.com in BOLD Letter for color blind people and Kindles or Red Letter Editions.

You can purchase copies from the following links:

<https://www.createspace.com/4450574> (USA)

Buy from your Amazon (if located in your country). Simple do a search for 'Modern Literal Version' in the search box for various sizes and formats available.

Bulk case orders, roughly \$88/18 for Dark Blue or \$109/18 to your door for Black (USA) at:

<http://www.ModernLiteralVersion.org> (Official web site)

(Aliases are: ModernLiteralVersion.com, mlvbible.org, mlvbible.com, mlvbible.net, mlvbible.info)

<http://www.ChristianLibrary.org/greek-ref> (A mirrored site; special thanks to ISCnetwork.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/MLVbible/> (Discussion Group)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/547049355442392> (Public Group for sharing files)

Or by e-mail: [mlvbible@gmail.com](mailto:mlvbible@gmail.com)

Free electronic versions available at [www.mlvbible.org](http://www.mlvbible.org) or at the Facebook location above.

Please advertise this on your website and social media. Billions of people do not know about the MLV and need it.

## Preface to the Modern Literal Version 2017

### Quick Overview

God wrote His New Covenant with man in a language called Koine Greek. The Modern Literal Version uses the Majority Greek Text (The New Testament in the Original Greek, Byzantine Textform 2005/2010, Compiled and Arranged by Maurice A. Robinson and William Pierpont).

Only three primary methods exist to translate a foreign language. The first is to translate each word, in a literal word for word fashion, keeping the original word order (ISBN: 978-1973921967). This, when combined with the Greek Bible is called a 'Greek interlinear' even though most of them attempt to be a 'translation' especially the pitiful 'reverse interlinear' of recent times. This will be our, not yet published, 'New Koine Greek Textbook VI.'

The Modern Literal Version is the second type of 'literal' translation also called a 'word-for-word' translation (descriptions 'coined' centuries ago). This sounds like an interlinear, but is not the same and the two should not be confused with each other. (This difference is where all those who talk about translations, who have never worked on a published translation, are misled and mislead others.) In a literal translation each word and phrase is uniformly rendered, Greek idioms (all languages have them, Greek has plenty of them) are carefully translated uniformly. The Greek parts of speech are rearranged as they would be in typical English: subject, verb, object, indirect object, and punctuation is added. Greek is extremely choppy and supplied words are needed to have an 'English like flow' to them. (In particular, the word "the" often needs to be added.) Supplied words should always be identified in all literal translations. Those which have no such markings are most likely paraphrases. This way the reader can always omit them if desired. Now for the *extremely rare* places (the unskilled think idioms are such places) where literal is too choppy for most English readers, two sub-methods exist, which are either paraphrasing or adding supplied words. The MLV uses the latter. Supplied words are written in *italics* in the MLV text. No truly literal translation can be 'English teachers approved' without paraphrasing.

The third translation method, and the *most* common one in the past 30 years, is to paraphrase the Greek into English. These are easy to spot because they read like a newspaper or a story book and have no supplied words marked in them. This type of translation is known by various names, such as dynamic equivalence, essentially literal, free style, thought-for-thought, better than a word-for-word, and so on. The paraphrased versions probably account for more than 95% of all Bible translations. We understand the value of a paraphrase for those looking for a Bible that reads as easily as a newspaper and that is never going to be used as a study tool. However, we feel strongly that thought-for-thought introduces too many editorial opinions. They are sometimes better described as 'opinion for opinion' because each time they are proofread by another person(s), more personal beliefs are exchanged for the Word of God. We desire to see a Bible that reproduces the original Greek Bible into modern English as faithfully as possible with as little editorial bias as possible. One way to look at it is like this: If there was a court case with a key document as evidence, and this document was in a foreign language, would a 'thought-for-thought' translation be acceptable? The document we are talking about here is the 'Last Will and Testament' of our Lord Jesus. Did you know that paraphrased bible versions are generally 10% smaller than literal ones in the number of words they contain? They are often watered down and those places that are disputed by the various religious groups will always match the beliefs of their translators, publishing company or the church behind the translation. The goal of everyone who has worked on the Modern Literal Version has been to keep any form of commentary or paraphrasing out of the translation as much as is humanly possible.

The MLV is not sold for profit because there is no denomination, publishing company, foundation or government behind it. All Christian groups have had the opportunity to propose fixes for the MLV or to assist in some way. The only uninspired traditions kept in the MLV are punctuation and capitalization, chapter and verse numbers, and the *not* God breathed non-chronological book order.

### The Open Source Bible Translation

The Modern Literal Version New Testament is considered 'completed,' although it has been open for revision by anyone since 1998. No bible should have ever been 'closed.' We doubt to ever need to make another major update because in 2017 very few 'Thus saith the Greek' recommendations were submitted. Our utmost desire is to have a translation that has no translation errors in it and we believe that the best way to produce an error-free translation is to keep it open to the public in the same manner as 'open-source software' is to programmers. In 16 years, we have found no better way than our 'open' translation idea to achieve this goal. Absolutely anyone in the world, any Christian affiliation, is able to contribute to the translation, including, the several million who have visited the Christian Library. You, too, may make recommendations or help in other ways, with either Greek or English type proofreading. If the recommendations warrant another update next year, we will do one each year in printed form and a Kindle edition, otherwise we will provide a correction list on the website. Free electronic versions are updated periodically throughout the year, as needed on the web sites and Facebook. The 'cutting edge' update is always the **BOLD** Letter Edition PDF at:

<http://www.ModernLiteralVersion.org/bibles/MLV/MLVBL.pdf>

As far as we know, this 'open' translation idea is unique to the MLV. You are invited to participate in helping to make the MLV error-free. There is even a Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/MLVbible> that now

has many offshoots. All who have helped have contributed to further the readability or accuracy of this translation or simply have double checked previous efforts. Now is the time for the Bible to be placed in the hands of everyday Christians, without employing a huge publishing company focused on making money. If you can suggest any corrections please send an email to mlvbible@gmail.com with subject line: 'MLV'.

## History

The MLV was the first translation to use the power of the computer (an 8086), and absolutely would have been impossible before the computer age. This translation would have been impossible without WordPerfect and its macro abilities (special thanks to Corel Corporation).

The 'Modern Literal Version New Testament' came about in 1987 due to a young Christian's goal to find an accurate Modern English translation from which to study. The New American Standard contradicted itself in Matthew 5:17 and Ephesians 2:15 for example. Almost all other Modern English translations do not claim to be literal or word-for-word and most that make such a claim are factually not! Concordance look-ups in all existing translations present non-uniform Greek word renderings and this too was an issue of concern.

A Bible Study Group, of which this new Christian was a part, was actively doing topical, English and Greek word studies with their Bibles and 'Englishman's Greek Concordances.' They discovered that the ASV was the most accurate translation, and initially started a study Bible cross reference section for it. Then an idea developed to do a slight revision of the 1901 American Standard Version for the public domain, code named 'ASV3'. Eventually, these ideas were dropped due to too many problems: the underlying Greek text, massive footnoting, archaic words, inconsistent Greek word translations, poor verb tensing, etc.

Then a better idea grew, let computers and programing do the work, then let humans proofread and edit the result, so the creation of a modern (English) literal version (which later became its name) was born. A group of workers, teachers, scholars, computer owners and programmers, who believe in the total authority and inspiration of the Bible, have devoted time, advice, software, money and work to the project. Now, over 30 years later, at least 64 experts in the original language have contributed work needed to make this translation a reality. Many others, about 370, 6 computer technicians, and another 1000 or so in all the MLV, Greek and other discussion groups on Facebook who have also helped with large amounts of proofreading, improvements to English comprehension, double-checking Greek definitions, compounds, synonyms, Greek concordance look-ups, accuracy checks and/or other menial (but extremely essential) tasks. Many thousands of corrections have been received via FTP, snail mail, telephone, chat, and e-mail, over the years. 99% of us have never met in person and know each other only by a nickname from email or chat. We will never be able to express our gratitude enough to all of these people, living and deceased.

There has been nothing traditional about the MLV and our unorthodox methods are what produced the 'world's most accurate' English New Testament. A side note, as the MLV went thru stages of growth an English concordance, Greek lexicon and Greek concordance were also created in rough form for tracking purposes, now called the 'New Koine Greek Textbook Series' and also available in print and electronic formats.

## The original intentions and guidelines for the Modern Literal Version

1. To translate the original Greek of the Bible, word-for-word, into English, then to further boost the accuracy of the MLV, we translate the same Greek word into as few different English words as is possible. We also do this for English words by not using the same English word for different Greek words. Careful attention was paid to synonyms, antonyms, compound words and the few Greek words which truly have multiple meanings. Greek has 'shades of meaning' no more than does equal English words (a common misconception). One way to look at this is: if God wanted 10 different words used instead of one single Greek word, the inspired writers would have penned it that way. The New Testament is its own best commentary when you see the same Greek word translated into the same English word throughout. We call this 'uniform and consistent' translating and we believe that we're the first translation to ever attempt this and had the power of computers to accomplish it. This form of translation is an extremely challenging task, and not one that many translators would ever take the time to do, even though it is now possible to do with computers. More information is in the 'Wording Statistics' section at the end or on the web site or in MySword and e-Sword.

2. The goal of the MLV was not to make it perfect everyday English, but to try to make it understandable to the majority of English speaking people, while remaining literal, especially to teenagers and 2<sup>nd</sup> speaking English people. Many sentences in the MLV start with conjunctions like 'and,' 'but,' 'for' and 'because.' This was so that we could split incredibly long sentences, some of which were more than 50 words in length, into shorter ones as we were translating the text into English. The Modern Literal Version is at about a 13-year old's reading level.

3. To translate some verses that have been misinterpreted for years by many religious groups, as close as possible to

the original language.

4. To use *italics* for supplied words and use supplied words as opposed to paraphrasing. We want people to see what we added.
5. To translate the money and measuring systems of the Bible into some understandable form.
6. To use 'will' for all future tenses, though it is not proper Modern English. It is the way most English people speak. However, 'shall' is retained in questions.
7. To use paragraph format. Verse format often takes meanings out of context or contributes toward misinterpretations of the context.
8. To use the more proper 'may' or 'might' for the subjunctive mood verbs. The ASV used 'should' and 'shall.' Shall is not considered 'conditional' in Modern English, but future tense. (See more in the '**Verb, Tenses, Moods**' section).
9. To arrange the Greek word order into normal English word order of subject verb object, (SVO). Following Greek word order is not more literal or accurate; if we retained the Greek order it would just be more like an interlinear without the Greek.
10. To footnote or explain in the '**Definitions**' section places where a literal translation could not be understood or an idiom used by the common Greeks. For example: 'into the ages' is an idiom for 'forever;' 'into the ages of the ages' is 'forevermore.' (These are not as common as many people would have you believe).
11. To render active tense verbs as 'is/are verb-ing' to help show action. Many people wrongly say the '-eth' ending used in older translations meant continual action. It was simply the way they spoke before the 1800's.
12. To fix the preposition and conjunction problems that plague all translations. Our biggest fix is the English word 'for' that was used even in the ASV for several Greek words which mean 'because of,' 'because,' 'to,' 'toward,' 'of,' 'in/on behalf of' and a mild form of 'because.' The MLV translated all Greek words that mean 'because,' 'because of' and 'in/on behalf of' as such. The other meanings are shown by use of asterisks (\*) with the two most common Greek words translated as 'for' ('eis,' G1520 = \*for and G1063 'gar' = for\*).
13. To avoid inconsistencies caused by splitting up the translators and proofreaders into groups. A typical translation may have 100 plus people but by the time you split them into 25 or more committees the number of people in one particular book might be as little as 4 and those different groups can cause stylistic and translation variations. Those who volunteer with the MLV tend to work all the way through the New Testament, so in the MLV the total per book far exceeds any committee type translation ever made.
14. To include a Harmony of the New Testament with AD dates, which gives a person the ability to read the New Testament straight through or in chronological order. (Start at Mark, then go to Acts: The Book of Conversions.)
15. When traditional renderings are not Greek, they will be translated properly. Oh well, and the theologians will just have to adjust; (added in 2013 because we found us also following tradition).
16. Translate words using their full translation even if a little too wordy in places to denote differences between English wording used for different Greek wording. Two examples are: 'together with' vs. 'with' (G4862 & its compounds); 'in order that' vs. 'that' (G2443 and its compounds).

The 1987-1999 version, at roughly 95% completed, was formally U.S. copyrighted and placed into the 'Christian Library' in June, 1999 at <http://www.ChristianLibrary.org>. In 2014, the MLV has an official site <http://www.ModernLiteralVersion.org>. The Christian Library is a mirror site to deal with most of the bandwidth issues (special thanks to ISCnetwork.com).

<http://www.ModernLiteralVersion.com> is for future growth in 2017.

Finally, a challenge to all who think that another translation is more accurate to the original Greek than the MLV: show us the correction needed! Please remember 'thus saith the Greek' not 'my version says.' This translation needs to be judged by the Greek, not anything else!

In Christ,

G. Allen Walker, June 9, 1999.



Computer Tech for the New Testament, 1987-2012  
 Revised and updated by multiple helpers from 2001-2017.  
 The glory is God's. Amen.

### General Translation Notes

We want an error-free translation. We want your input should you ever find a typo or a better Greek correction for the MLV. As far as we know the MLV is the only Bible in print that does. Please check: [www.modernliteralversion.org](http://www.modernliteralversion.org) for a current PDF update to make sure the typo or fix has not already been applied before submitting to [mlvbible@gmail.com](mailto:mlvbible@gmail.com). Thank you in advance.

The primary goal is to keep the MLV free from theological concerns and traditions by translating the text as literally as possible while retaining modern language and readability. The 'Open Source' approach is also a great 'checks and balance' system.

The MLV is NOT under the control of any denomination or publishing company or government and is not the current work of any either that is why it can be sold for no profit.

The Greeks wrote in present tense to give the reader the feeling of 'being there' and so this translation leaves present tense unchanged. We hope this will help you feel closer to our Lord and God.

Degree signs (°) are used to denote plural you° and commands where a plural subject is not clearly stated (imperative 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural most often).

Asterisks (\*) are used for denoting words listed in the 'Definitions' section below. These are for the few instances where the English translation does not lend itself to a satisfactory meaning of the underlying Greek word. In addition to this, we use an asterisk to denote the difference between one English word that is being used for two different Greek words (for example, see **Age\*** below.) This substantially aids word studies.

G1-G5624 are from the Strong's Numbering System, and are used often here because Unicode is not supported in various conversion processes. Sorry that these annoy you Greek Scholars, but 99% of the people who want to look up the Koine Greek listings in the MLV will be using them.

A hyphen (-) is used in those places where two English words come from a single Greek word. It is of particular benefit to Greek scholars and the student who wishes to cross-reference words to the MLV concordance and Greek lexicon.

*Italicized words* are words not found directly in the Greek but are implied by the context. These words are sometimes needed to help show action, tense or expansion of the meaning of words that the English does not convey. Since the MLV is literal, not 'thought-for-thought,' supplied words are of significant assistance for those phrases which are exceptionally difficult to read. By pointing out these words using italics, the reader has the option to disregard them. The articles 'a' and 'an' are not found in the Greek and as such, are always supplied though never marked.

Paragraphs are used in this translation with no credence given to chapter or verse numbers since verse formats, chapter titles or other special formatting often takes ideas out of context, (for example, see Mark 8:34 to 9:1). Double-spaced paragraphs are attempts to arrange sentences by subject. Single-spaced paragraphs are for conversations or for sub-topics. We did not include subject headings since we decided this would reflect opinions, and something not desirable in the Word of God.

Single or double quotation marks are not used in this translation for conversations, since they are not found in the original language, and adding them would be an area of opinion.

We also do not capitalize pronouns that appear to be referring to God ('Him,' 'He' etc.). This is to avoid inserting our opinion in the translation; the Greek does not make these distinctions.

**Red Lettering** or **Bold Lettering** (electronic or printed editions) is used for the words of Jesus, God the Father and the Holy Spirit even in an indirect quote as in Acts 26. If you do not believe the **RED** or **BOLD** should be used in a certain area, please ignore.

Greek is participle crazy. A rather large number of participles are found in sentences; it is common that a sentence contains no main verb, and one participle after another. We have added supplied words in an effort to stay more literal and yet break these into smaller, more readable English sentences.

The curly brackets ({...}) offer additional information. They are blue in the Red Letter edition or gray in the Bold Letter release. These contain:

1. The Old Testament reference at the end of the verse, which may be an exact quote or a paraphrase by the inspired writer, or simply the location of the historical event. Single quotes are used at the beginning and end of actual quotes or paraphrases. We did not attempt to translate the Greek in Old Testament quotes to match the Hebrew to English translations.

2. We use a superscript '{F}' to represent footnotes to the left of the word instead of subscript 1,2,3, etc., as done by most. The reader can read the actual footnote at the end of the chapter. This is just one way we use to keep one master copy for various printed and electronic formats.

3. We used a {T} to denote wording that is not found in the majority of manuscripts. Most of these were early attempts to harmonize various events which were added into the KJV or maybe commentary that was added which later became part of the text by copyists. The exception being, Acts 8:37 in which the last section 'I believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God.' was quoted in the late 2<sup>nd</sup> Century by Irenaeus, which predates almost all manuscripts, so 8:37 was inserted back into the MLV text. 1Jn 5.7b-8a was put there from the Catholic Latin Bible and it not included.

4. 'Harmony of the New Covenant' is a man-made study help and combines information from the four books of Jesus' life here on the earth and place the actual time that the letters were written in the book of Acts. (The Bible was not written in Encyclopedia format. Not all information on any subject is generally all inclusive in any one area.) Here is an example of the 'Great Commission' or better 'How to Make or Become a Disciple of Christ' and the way it is represented in the Modern Literal Version throughout Mark.

{Mar 16:15-18 and Mat 28:18-20 and Luk 24:46-47 Mountain in Galilee}

Here is a combination of the above passages as an example, Mark is **BOLD**, Matthew is black, Luke is italicized (the punctuation was fixed to attempt to make it easier to read in English).

And he said to them, **When\* you\* travel** into all the world to *all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem* to all creation, preach the good-news, **make disciples of all the nations.**

He who believes (*and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name*) and is immersed\* (**immersing\* them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit**), will be saved, **teaching them to observe all things, as many things as I have commanded you\***, but he who disbelieves will be condemned.

**And behold, I am with you\* all the days until the end of the earth.**

### Definitions

**A, An** are always supplied words in English but not marked in the text.

**Age\*** is Strong's Dictionary number 2244 (henceforth, we will abbreviate as G2214 for electronic and book uniformity). It is used in very much the same way we think of a person's 'age.' The other 'age, ages' without the \*, is for a period of time. This 'age' is also translated as 'world' 22 times. Context determines which word should be used.

**Admonish** means to 'instruct with warning' G3560.

**And** from G2532 is used the way we use a comma in lists. We have kept these 'and' and any other Greek words that we could, even if they are not 'English-teacher approved.'

**Angel** See **Messenger**.

**Apostle** is a transliterated word. The English equivalent would be 'one sent' with the meaning of 'one sent on a mission.' Apostle has been kept when speaking of Jesus' apostles. Ambassador is the other rendering of this Greek word and truly a better translation of G652.

**Appointed\*** is G5087 which literally is 'placed' but we don't use 'placed' that way in English. The other 'appointed' without the \* is from compounds of G5021 and means 'command or appoint.'

**Assuredly** is also 'amen' which roughly means 'so be it.' Jesus said this, (sometimes twice), at the beginning of His teachings. Old English is 'verily.' G281.

**Baptism** see the translation: **Immersion**.

**Be, is, are, was, were, being, been** verbs are generally 'helper words' added to other English verbs, adjectives or rarely nouns, to translate some Greek verbs. When they are not 'helper words' then they are from compounds of G1510 ('be, is, was...') and sometimes but rarely G2192 ('have, hold, help') and G5225 (denoted as **be\***, **is\***, **was\***, **were\*** **being\***; exist, possess).

**Because** is probably the largest improvement in the MLV over all other translations. In translations dating from 1423 even up to now, the English word 'for' has been used for words that should have always been translated as 'because,' G473, G3754, or 'because of,' G1223, G1360, G1752, G5484. A synonym that loses so much meaning is 'on behalf of' G5228. Jesus did not die *for* us; he died *on behalf of* us. See **For**, also.

**Believe, belief, faith, faithful, entrust** in verb, adjective, adverb, or noun forms, are some of those very few Greek words (G4100, G4102, G4103) which carry more meaning than the English equivalent. These words also carry the meaning: 'obey,' 'had been persuaded.' In the Greek language, the antonym of 'believe' is 'is disobedient' (G544). See John 3:36 for both words together in the same verse.

**Believe in** literally means 'believe into,' and **Believe on** literally means 'believe upon' in the majority of all places in the New Testament. A similar expression is found in Mat 28:19 'into the name.'

**Belt** is impossible to contextually distinguish; it could be a simple belt, or a complex series of leather straps used to hold tools, weapons, money or a belt of armor. The girdle (belt) was worn on the hips, or waist, or across the chest. G2223.

**Between\*** is an idiom meaning 'up *through* the middle,' G3319.

**Blessed\*** see **Gracious\*** below also. G3107.

**Bowels** are where the Greeks thought the emotions were born. This is where we get expressions such as 'desires of the heart,' 'gut feeling,' 'nervous stomach' and so on. G4698.

**Brethren** is specifically 'brothers' but used more often to describe kinfolk, whether by family ties or by the blood of Jesus. Though translated from a Greek masculine noun, G80, the word includes males and females in context.

**Bring\*** and other verb forms, can be translated as 'lead,' G71 and its compounds. This was done primarily for concordance look-ups.

**By** (and 'under') is the literal translation of the Greek word G5229. Otherwise, 'by' is a substitution, since the pure English translation just does not really conform to normal English usage. Most of the previous ones in the MLV (before we fixed them) were primarily 'through' ('dia' G1223) which is now down to 3 or 'from' or 'out of' ('ek' G1537) now down to 6 or the literal 'in' ('en' G1722) unknown number are left. An interesting fact from this is that 'by faith' or 'by the faith' was never truly literal. Oh well, the theologians will have to adjust.

**Call\*** and other verb forms are from G3004 (say, speak) and might be better as 'is spoken of as' or 'is spoken to be' and is different from the compounds of the synonyms of G2596 (invited, called, surnamed) and G3687 (is named). All 'called' words used by other various translations from the Greek words for 'summon' or 'shout out' have been rendered properly in the MLV. So every time you see 'called' it can be 'invited' in the MLV same as with all the Greek compound words.

**Centurion\***, used in Mark, is simply the Latin version of the word since he wrote to a Gentile audience.

**Centurions** were military commanders of over 100 soldiers. They were highly esteemed individuals of society. (G2763, Latin root; G1543, Greek.)

**Charity** in the MLV does not mean 'money.' It may include money but literally means 'good, merciful or kind acts.' G1654

**Christ** is a transliterated Greek adjective, G5547, that would translate as 'anointed.' Messiah is the Hebrew translation. In the 2015 version it was rendered as 'Jesus the Christ' either a title or a description but dropped in 2016 version.

**Church**, see **Congregation\*** below.

**Class** (a noun) is the priestly service limited to a stated series of days. G2183. This is not to be confused with 'class' (a verb), which is found at 2 Cor. 10:12. G1469.

**Cohort** is a Roman military term used to describe a group of 600 soldiers. G4686.

**Come\*** and its other verb forms, would literally be 'become' or possibly 'come to be' but we just don't speak that way. G1096.

**Coming** (as in Second Coming), G3952, has been translated more properly as 'presence.'

**Commanders** were military commanders of over 1000 soldiers. G5506

**Congregation(s)\*** was the original translation by Tyndale in the first English translation from the Greek and then later changed to 'church' by the Reformed Protestants in the Geneva Bible, and is a man-made word. The word 'church' was then perpetuated by the Catholic Church and Church of England up until today and is now used in most translations simply because of tradition. This man-made tradition has been used over the centuries to promote a 'church' rather than the Lord's 'congregation' of believers. The word in context is not a name but a description of ownership, or simply a local congregation located in some area. The word could be translated 'assembly.' In Modern English, most think of 'church' as a building. The original Greek word, even in the Bible, carries no special reverence. It is used to describe Jews, a mob, a local congregation, and the congregation of faithful, obedient believers worldwide as in Matthew 16:18, Acts 2:47, called the one body in Eph. 4:1-6, Eph. 5:23 and others. Translating this Greek word as 'the called out' would be like saying a 'pineapple' is an 'apple produced by a pine tree.' The word was in use in all Greek writings and meant some form of 'leaving your home to congregate elsewhere, generally in public for town announcements.' (G1577).

**Consequently\*** is used to translate a couple Greek particles, G686 and G687. Consequently is not exactly 'therefore' in English. It means that the previous statement is probably so or will become so.

**Container(s).** The Bible uses Hebrew and Greek measurements, such as 'cor' which is a measurement of volume equal to about 90 gallons. We rendered these words as volume + the word 'container.' For example, 'a ninety-gallon container.' This was done so we would not have to footnote every mention of these words; see Luke 16:7.

**Covenant(s)\*** can be translated as 'agreement,' 'contract,' 'testament' or 'will' as in the expression 'Last Will and Testament.' The underlying Greek word, G1242 and its compounds were translated uniformly as 'covenant' because 'testament' has no verb forms in English. It could refer to the Old or New Testament or Covenant, or just a simple agreement, depending on the context. The Old Testament law was until the death of Jesus and the New Testament law is after His death, (see Hebrews 9-10 and Galatians 4:4). The entire letter to the Hebrews deals with why Christians are no longer bound by the laws or traditions of the Old Testament. The events recorded in the Gospels and the first chapter of Acts were actually part of the Old Covenant with God.

**Cubit** is a forearm's length. About 20-21 inches depending of which cubit measurement was common to that area. G4083.

**Dead\*, die\*** are literally translated as 'ended.' G5053.

**Deacon(s)** see footnote in 1 Timothy 3.

**Denarius** is a coin of the Roman currency system which we have retained in the MLV translation. Plural is **denarii**. The various other denominations are given here a rough comparison to Modern Day American currency.

1. A **denarius** was equivalent to a day's wage of the normal working class. It was a silver coin with Caesar's face on it. G1220.

2. Two drachmas was worth about 4 denarius, translated as 'four-denarii.' G1323.

3. A lepton was a bronze coin, translated as 'bronze-coin.' Two of these is equal to an Assarion or Quadran which are copper coins worth the cost of a dove or two sparrows, which is about a couple mouthfuls of food. Assarion and Quadran are translated as 'copper coin.' About 50 cents in US money. G3016.

4. Mina which is translated as '200 denarius coins' is a about 80% of a year's salary in modern terms. In context it probably meant a whole years wage. G3414.

5. Slater was a coin equal to two drachmas or four denarii, translated as 'four-denarii coin.' G4715.

6. **Talant** is not a coin but actually about 75 pounds of silver. Equal to about 1 million dollars in US money today which is roughly 6000 denarius coins. Talant has nothing to do with the English word 'talent' which was how the Greek word, G5007, was erroneously transliterated in various other translations. This has led to much confusion and is kept in other translations due to tradition.

**Devil** was changed to 'the Slanderer' in the 2013 version, is back in 2015. The Greek word is an adjective used as a noun, a transliteration of Hebrew, which has a perfect English equivalent 'a slanderer.' This Greek word is where we got 'diabolical.' The Bible even uses the Slanderer and the Adversary (previously rendered Satan) together in Rev. 12:9 and 20:2.

**Different** as it occurs six times in the MLV is from the Greek word, G2087, which is translated as 'other' or 'another.' In context, it might mean something added as opposed to something different or opposite.

**Disobedience\*** is the result of a ‘refusal to hear,’ or more subtly a refusal to take in what you hear. G3876. The other disobedience (without the \*) is the end result of ‘disbelieve.’ G543.

**Divine\*** is the only ‘divine’ that literally comes from the base word ‘God.’ G2304 and G2316.

**Encounter\*** and other verb forms are literally ‘throw together with’ from G4820.

**Except\*** is the improper preposition of G4133. The other ‘except’ (without the \*) is an idiom of the literal ‘if not’ (G1508, G1487 and G3361).

**Fallen-asleep** was used by Jesus and then Paul to mean dead or death in most instances. G2837.

**For** is a preposition that has no true Greek equivalent. ‘To’ is the literal translation in all places in the Modern Literal Version. Asterisk (\*) versions are listed below. The conjunction ‘for’ used in other translations, which means ‘because, because of, in or on behalf of,’ are translated as such in the MLV.

**\*For** represents the Greek preposition G1519 (eis), that is literally translated as ‘into,’ ‘to’ or ‘toward.’ It never means ‘because of.’ No translation has ever translated ‘eis’ as ‘because of.’ Sometimes ‘leading toward’ works very well to get the meaning across and has been used by many translations in some places. This preposition expresses forward action in the Greek verb where the English word ‘for’ can be used with verbs of actions past or future. Again, all Greek words in the Modern Literal Version that mean ‘because’ are translated as ‘because.’

**For\*** represents the Greek word G1063 (gar). It is a conjunction with no exact English equivalent. It is a mild form of ‘because.’

**Forgive\*** and its verb forms are the verb form of the Greek noun translated as ‘favor’ or ‘grace.’ G5483

**Fornication** is from the Greek word G4202 (pornia), which means any premarital or extramarital sexual acts between two or more people. It also means prostitution with its Greek base word meaning ‘sell.’ It does not in anyway mean lust. It means physical sex, including all variations of physical sex. This word should never be translated as either ‘immorality’ or ‘sexual immorality’ as many translations have it wrongly.

**Furlong** is 1/8 of a mile in English. But in the MLV it is from G4218 (stadium), which is 1/8 of a Roman mile 607 ft. (53 ft. less than the modern furlong).

**Gentiles** is also translated as ‘nations.’ The word means all nations which are not Israel or all people who are not Jews. G1484.

**Gift\*, Gifts\*** are G5496, another noun form of the Greek noun, G5485, translated as ‘favor’ or ‘grace.’

**Gird** and its verb forms, means to put on your belt, the final act of dressing yourself for the public or for a job, (see **Belt** also). G2224.

**Godliness\*** is literally ‘devoutness.’ The base word is ‘worship’ not ‘God.’ Modern English does not necessarily use the word ‘devout’ as something to do with God. G2125.

**Good\*** is literally ‘well.’ G2095 and compounds. The other ‘good’ (no \*) are actually two synonyms. Good in general and good outwardly. G0018 and G2570.

**Good-news** is simply just ‘good news’ or used to mean Jesus and His teaching in general, (1Co 15:1-4; 2Th 1:8, etc.). Originally in the MLV, the Greek word was translated as ‘gospel’ in the religious context and ‘good news’ in other contexts but was adopted as ‘good-news’ throughout in 2013 in order not to ‘commentate’ in the Word. G2098.

**Gracious\*** is the translation of G2128. Traditionally, in other translations, the word ‘blessed’ was an adjective in all the places that would have read something along the lines of: ‘Blessed be God.’ (‘Fortunate’ be God, is craziness. ‘Happy’ be God, is again craziness. God is surely not ‘happy’ with us.)

**Heart(s)\*** is literally the intestines. The Greeks thought emotions were born there, in the way we often feel emotions in our gut. G4698.

**Hell** is from 2 different Greek synonyms which were the common names for the trash dump that was always on fire outside the city, Gehenna and Tartarus. They used the same terms to describe the deepest, darkest, hot realms of Hades where the most evil were cast after dead to suffer punishment, in English that is Hell. G1067, G5020 a verb “throw into Hell (Tartarus, one time 2Pe 2:4).” From a bible standpoint Hades is where all go at death, paradise or flame, Luke 16. Tartarus is where the heavenly messengers who sinned are now. At judgement the ‘flame side’ of Hades and Tartarus will be cast into Gehenna, i.e. Hell.

**Helper\*** is from a Greek masculine noun, G3875, always capitalized. It is a ‘person called to help.’

**Hosanna** is a Hebrew word meaning ‘Save me, I pray.’ or ‘Please deliver me.’

**Helper words**, are words added to help translate certain Greek tenses, moods, cases, person, direction, timing or intensity into English; they are not supplied words.

**Immerse\*** or **dipping** and all its verb, noun and adjective forms are the translation of the Greek verb, G0907 (baptizo), and its Greek variations (**immersion\***, **immerser\***), which all mean to submerge completely. Baptize is a transliterated word which has been retained by most translations for profit. Baptism is not used in the Modern Literal Version. In 1999, until baptism was changed to immersion in about 2002, over 75% of the comments for revision of the Modern Literal Version from readers or visitors to the Christian Library were ‘make baptism immersion.’ This word has a perfect English equivalent and so immersion has been used. For a Bible definition read Romans 6:1-6. The Greek word was common to the Greeks and was used to describe a ‘bath,’ ‘washing dishes,’ ‘ceremonial washings (always plural)’ and ‘Christian baptism.’ See Mark 7:4,8; Mark 16:16, Colossians 2:12-14, 1 Peter 3:21, etc. This word never meant ‘shower.’ There is a Greek word, G4472, for ‘sprinkling,’ G4472 (base word ‘rain-o’), and it is also used in the New Testament. Since the MLV is not made for profit, we will be keeping ‘immersion.’

**Indeed\*** (if indeed) is a conditional particle (G1437b and G1512). The real interesting one is the indeed (G3303) without an asterisk and its use with ‘but’ G1161 in comparative statements.

**Iota** (subscript) and **serif** are the smallest punctuation or accent marks of Greek. G2503.

**Irreproachable**, G410, and **Unimpeachable**, G423, always plural, are both in the qualifications of Lord’s earthly congregation’s leadership, described in various Bible versions and locations within as: elders, bishops, overseers, pastors, shepherds, presbyters. These words do not translate well into English. They are simply a description of a person not under an accusation by an enemy or legal system or better as under any accusation for that matter, this person is blameless, guiltless and has an impeccable reputation.

**Keep** in the MLV is one of those very few Greek words, G5083 and compounds, which carry more meaning than the English word. The word carries with it: ‘to guard’ and/or ‘to watch over.’ ‘Keep’ the commandments would be to ‘guard’ them from harm too.

**Koine Greek** is the language of the New Testament, it was not even known to exist before the 1880’s. All translators and reference books (Strong’s Dictionaries for a really good example) written before then were based on the idea that all Greek is the same Greek from Homer to that time with little variations even as the language changed from use over the centuries.

**Lie** and its other verb forms are all related to ‘falsehood.’ English teachers may not approve of the MLV using ‘laying’ and ‘laid’ for transitive and intransitive verbs of ‘lay,’ but a 13 year old and second English speaking people will. In context it may be hard for even English teachers to know for sure what the expression ‘lie in opposition’ actually means without the adjustment to ‘lay in opposition.’

**Loins** is literally the hips or hip areas.

**Like** is literally ‘as.’ It was common to their language, but comes across as slang in English. G5613.

**Likewise\*** is G5615, a purely literal translation would be ‘as the same’ (i.e. likewise, similarly), and is marked more as a way to show it is not the other likewise which is from G3668 (similar).

**Love\*** and its other verb forms, are words meaning Christian love. This word in religious writings had an intensified meaning, sacrificial love. The same Greek spoken outside of the Bible, ‘love of people’ or simply ‘like.’ The Greeks had different words for different kinds of love, unlike English. This word is G25 (agapao).

**Make\*, makes\*, made\*, making\*** are simply the rendering of G4160 (poieo), and a few of its compounds. All other renderings of 'make' wording are where the word 'make' is added to another English verb or noun to better translate a Greek word into English.

**Master\*** is simply marked to show G1988 used in Luke 5-17 vs. G1203 used elsewhere.

**May, Might, Should** see **Subjunctive Mood** in '**Definitions Continued**' section.

**Messenger** is simply transliterated as 'angel' in many translations, G32. We have opted to translate it rather than transliterate. Only context can determine if the messenger was from God or man or the Evil One. We will always prefer not to tell you what we believe in the MLV.

**Minister\*** with its other verb and noun forms are words from G3008-G3011, these are to describe a type of servant whose service is more public vs. the domestic servant, or bondservant who are house or estate workers and the bondservant who serve who owns his bond. Most translation just make these all 'serve' and 'servant' and do not take in consideration the different Greek words and the slight differences.

**Never\*** would be best rendered as 'in absolutely no way!' an emphatic *no!* or *not!* but is just way too wordy to fit into most verses. When never\* occurs with the subjunctive mood verb as in, 'may never,' it does not mean 'will not.' Instead, there is a slight possibility this could happen. This has been a Tyndale tradition replicated over and over for the past 600 years. Oh well the theologians will have to adjust.

**Obey\*, obedient\*, obedience** are G5218 and 5219. It is related to listening obediently to someone with authority. For example, a soldier listening to and obeying his commanding officer or children to their parents, as in: 'Children, obey\* your° parents.' The other 'obey' and 'obedient' words, G3980, G3982, come from the same root word as 'believe.' (See **Believe**).

**Offend** and **Offense** literally means to 'snare,' 'stumble' or a 'cause to stumble.' G4634 and G4625.

**Only begotten** is from a Greek word G3439 which literally means 'only born of a mother' (Classical Greek of the LXX) or 'only born of a father' (The Father)' (Koine Greek of the N.T.). This clarifies the statement in the Bible 'we are all sons of God through Christ Jesus,' and we do not end up with a Bible contradiction as others who have used 'one and only,' 'only,' 'only born.' One other line of thought is 'only unique,' but this removes the 'born' part. 'Only special born' would then settle all instances in the New Testament and would still fit the Greek.

**Pregnant\*** is literally 'swollen,' G1471, and the other 'pregnant,' G1094, is 'with a belly.' The Greeks did not have a good word for pregnancy.

**Present\*** is a different Greek word (G3918) from the other more common 'present' (Greek compounds of G2476).

**Prostitute** is the best English word we have that is not vulgar to describe a sexually promiscuous individual or a prostitute or both, primarily female. Context is not always certain as to which meaning is applicable either. G4204.

**Rabbi** and **Rabboni** both mean teacher in the Hebrew language. G4461 and G4462.

**Regeneration\*** is the restoration of a thing to its pristine state, its renovation, as a renewal or restoration of life after death as in the death of the Law, the birth of Jesus' Law or death of our previous life to live as new creations. In some past versions: rebirth. G3824

**Recognize** is also translated as 'fully know' or 'know fully.' It is the reader's choice of which they prefer, since they are interchangeable. G1921.

**Rejected\*** has more meaning to it in the Greek and is best thought of as: 'they tested it, they did not like it and so they rejected it.' G593.

**Repent, repentance** are terms which mean to change your heart or perception, to 'do a 180,' to have an afterthought. G3539.

**Rise\* and Raise\*** with other verb forms are literally 'stand up,' but that poses a problem since we do not use that idiom in English, G0450.

**Separate\*** and other verb forms, are from ‘border or boundary’ which would be ‘border off’ or the lighter meaning of ‘quarantine off.’ The other ‘separate’ is ‘make room between.’ G0873.

**Serve\*** and other verb forms, are the verb form of bondservant, which is best described as to serve in or under bondage of someone which could be voluntarily or not. Moses was a bondservant, which is how he gained his wife. Bondservants could be slaves, people paying off a debt or hired servants under a contract. The specific type of servant cannot be determined, even in context. G1398.

**Should, May, Might** see **Subjunctive Mood** in the ‘Verb, Tense and Moods’ section.

**Sold\*, selling\*** are G4097 and is only used in the sense of ‘sold for money.’ The other sell, sold (G4453) can also be barter or exchange.

**Sound\*** is also translated as ‘healthy.’ G5198.

**Spirit** in capitalized form as rendered in the ASV was used in the MLV, since we never read of any disputes of its renderings in the 100 yrs it was used commonly. If you, as the reader, believe Spirit is not the Holy Spirit just ignore the capital ‘S.’ All capitalization and punctuation are man made, please ignore any you believe to be wrong. ‘The Spirit of the truth’ as it occurs in the Greek 3 times in John 14-16, and maybe once in 1 John 4, could be a title, ‘Spirit of Truth.’ G4151.

**Spirit(s)\*** is literally ‘soul.’ G5590. ‘Breath of life’ and its compounds occur only in Philippians 2.

**Standard\*** is like a U.S. yardstick. A round straight piece of wood or metal used as a standard of measurement to measure the length or distance of something. It is used figuratively in most instances of the New Testament. G2583.

**Stewardship** means to manage the house or household, or to manage the affairs of others. G3622.

**Than** though marked as supplied, is most often a translation of a genitive Greek word when next to a comparative or superlative adjective or adverb; a Greek idiom. As an example ‘he is greater of me’ would be ‘he is greater *than* I.’

**\*That** is G3705 which is stronger than Modern English ‘that.’ It means ‘in order that’ but not as strong as the word **that\***, listed below.

**That\*** in Greek is G2443 (hina), which literally means ‘in order that’ but is just too wordy for some English sentences.

**\*That\*** was used to replace a Greek idiom that reads ‘to the to verb’ (G1519 (eis) + G3588 neutered (to) + an infinitive verb), occasionally G4314 instead of G1519. The ASV scholars had started to replace this idiom with ‘to the end {the subject} should/may {the verb}.’ We did this uniformly throughout the New Testament until the 2015 version but as ‘to this end, *that* {the subject} should/may {the verb}’ but even this is difficult to read. So now we have done the second best option by converting all of these to a subjunctive like form, **\*that\*** {the subject} should/may {the verb}.’ **\*That\*** can be read as ‘in order that’ if this makes more sense.

**The** occurs in Greek same as in English with one major exception, ‘the’ is used with proper nouns. ‘Paul’ is literally ‘the Paul.’ We have tried to include all definite articles other than those with proper nouns. Many would say they should be dropped in some places but our opinion in this matter is if the inspired writers included ‘the’ then we should put it there in English whenever possible. The inspired writers could have left ‘the’ out in most of these questionable places and it still would have been good Greek grammar, especially in Paul’s and Luke’s writings who were fluent in speaking Greek. G3588.

**There\*** is simply a way to show G847 vs. G1563 and its compounds.

**View** is a stronger form of ‘see’ or ‘look.’ It means to ‘view as a spectator’ or to ‘view from the side lines.’ View implies that there is more attention being given to what is being viewed. G2334.

**Travel**, can be a short distance or around the world. G4198.

**Unfaithful, disbelieve, unbeliever** and all verb, noun or adjective forms or these or similar in the MLV could be translated as ‘disobey’ or ‘is disobedient.’ Any Greek word compound of G1 & any compound of G3982.



**When\***, and **while\***, are helpers words used to help create English like verb tenses from Greek participles.

**With\*** is literally 'in' or 'at' or 'among,' G1722 (en).

**Wormwood** may be a person or thing, and an actual substance which is bitter tasting. G894.

**You<sup>o</sup>, your<sup>o</sup>, yours<sup>o</sup>** are the plural forms of 'you' and 'your.' By keeping these you will find teachings in the MLV that are lost in almost all other Modern English translations. We have never understood why modern translators fail to incorporate the plural 'you.' We guess it was too much work for them.

### Words That Share the Same Greek Word

These are words where context determines the correct word but are noteworthy to the average non-Greek student; enclosed together in (parentheses): (grace, favor), (complete, mature; all verb, noun and adjective forms), (patterns, examples), (jealous, zealous), (comfort, encourage, plead), (might, should), (gentiles, nations), (condemnation, judgement), (healthy, sound), (keep, guard, observe), (lust, covet), (pursue, persecute), (ready, prepared), (save, cure), (tempt, test), (way, road), (weak, sick), (witness, testify), (will, wish) and the Greek synonym (will, plan), ('age' can be 'world'), (non hyphenated 'hold' can be 'have') ('lead' can be 'bring'), ('return' can be 'turn') ('speech' can be 'word'), ('toward' can be 'to' or '*leading to*' even '*to obtain*'), ('call' or 'called' can be 'invite' or 'invited' in most instances), ('covenant,' 'testament'; though 'testament' is not used in the actual MLV's text).

### Evangelism & Truth

Many congregations give the MLV to all the members and any visitor; yours should consider this too. Please point out the Simple Reading Schedule to those who receive these, to help them read God's Word, especially for the first time. The MLV is the only translation we know to exist in which every word can be looked up in a standard dictionary, and the proper meaning is 'Bible' correct. The MLV is written at about a 13-year-old's reading level; even some 'big' bible words were simplified.

We want your input should you ever find a typo or a better Greek correction for the MLV. Please check: [www.modernliteralversion.org](http://www.modernliteralversion.org) for a current PDF update and make sure the typo or fix has not already been applied before submitting to [mlvbible@gmail.com](mailto:mlvbible@gmail.com). Thank you in advance. As far as we know, the MLV is the only Bible in print that wants such input.

### Introduction to the Good News Letters

The first four books of the New Testament are traditionally called the *gospels*, a word which means 'good news.' These are four biographies about Christ Jesus, written to share the good news about His life, death, and resurrection. Each of these four *gospels* was written to a different audience, and so each one has a slightly different approach—but they are all accurate biographies of Christ Jesus. Matthew wrote his *good-news* to a Jewish audience, and so he included several quotations from the Old Testament, showing that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah they had been waiting to come. Mark wrote to a Roman audience, which liked their reading to be more action-oriented, so his account focuses more on the actions of Jesus. Most scholars believe that Mark is written in chronological order. Luke wrote to a more detail-oriented audience, and his account is filled with historical and geographical details that were not included by the other writers. John wrote to a general audience, guiding them to faith in Jesus as the Son of God. John wrote his account much later than the others, so he concentrates more on aspects of Jesus' life not mentioned previously. It makes a great supplement to the other three. All who lived during this time of these books were still under the Law of Moses, Galatians 4:4. Jesus' teachings during this time were to introduce the Jews to the covenant promised to Abraham completed by Jesus' death, Hebrews 9:16-17.

***The following introductions are arranged as you should read the Good-news accounts for better understanding (Mark, Matthew, John, Luke then onward to Acts).***

#### Introduction to Mark

45-52 AD.

The book of Mark, better titled as 'The Good-news According to Mark,' was written for a Roman audience. The author of the book does not identify himself, but the early church attributed the authorship to John Mark, cousin of Barnabas and possibly Peter's son. It is fast paced and should have been the first book of the New Testament. With this in mind, many feel this gospel was written primarily to the Romans who were very industrious and proud of their achievements. Jesus' heroic service to others and His willingness to die for others would attract Roman attention too. The Romans were not interested in lots of extra details, nor were they too concerned about prophecies contained in

Jewish writings from hundreds of years earlier (Mark only quotes three Old Testament prophecies). Mark even disregards many instances of special Jewish interest and explains Jewish customs and language for non-Jewish readers (5:41; 7:34; 15:34). Mark gives us one of the three reasons for Jesus' death: A ransom for many - 10:45. For the forgiveness of sins - Matthew 26:28. For the sheep - John 10:11. Isaiah 52:13-53:12 is the very relevant background for this Good-news book. The events in Mark are held by scholars to be in chronological order. Starting from His immersion (baptism) Mark portrays Jesus as a Man constantly on the move for God, with the word 'immediately' appearing 42 times in this book, the shortest of the Good-news accounts. Percentage-wise, Mark spends more time dealing with the final week of Jesus' life than any of the other Good-news writers. The final instructions given by Jesus after His resurrection, in this biography, are to 'preach the good-news to the whole creation. He who believes and is immersed will be saved, but he who disbelieves will be condemned' (Mark 16:15-16).

### **Introduction to Matthew**

45-52 AD.

The book of Matthew is better called 'The Good News According to Matthew.' The writer is traditionally thought to be Matthew (Levi), a tax collector whom Jesus called to be an apostle (Matthew 9:9-13; 10:3). This biography of Jesus the Christ was written primarily for Jews, to convince the Jews that Jesus is the prophesied Messiah which is why Matthew spent so much time showing how Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecies— things that would have been irrelevant to a non-Jewish audience. A key verse in Matthew is 5:17 where Jesus states He came to fulfill the law. Matthew presents the teachings of Jesus in large sections and discusses the works of Jesus (emphasizing His power). Jesus' speech to the Jews in what is commonly called the 'Sermon on the mount' is a contrast between the Law of Moses vs. New Testament Law, outward vs. inward actions. This section contains the most misquoted verse in the bible by sinners 7:1, 'do not judge.' Luckily Christians have read John 5:30 and 7:24 and have seen many examples of Jesus and the inspired writers judging (or condemning) others or their practices. Beginning with the birth of Jesus, Matthew recounts how Jesus lived a perfect life under the Law of Moses (Gal 4:4), and how His death would set the stage for a New Testament (Covenant) under which men could be saved. The final instructions given by Jesus after His resurrection, in this biography, are on how disciples are made: by teaching and immersing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:18-20). After the list of apostles in Acts 1:13, Matthew disappears from the history of the New Testament.

### **Introduction to John**

67-95 AD

The Good-news account by John, which was most likely written after the other three fills in some gaps that were not covered by Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Eight percent of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are in John, and ninety-two percent is unique to John through the Holy Spirit. No specific writer is stated but the similarities in writing style, thought patterns, vocabulary and the 'very' Koine Greek language of the Good-news of John, 1-3 John, and Revelation (denoted as 'John') is unmistakable. This 'John' was always assumed to be apostle John, the son of Zebedee.

John writes to a general audience. John talks about the unbelieving Jews and equates them to the world. He also talks about the Greek speaking Jews (Hellenistic) in this book and shows many witnesses confirming that Jesus is the Christ prophesied of in the Old Testament. John states his purpose in 20:30, 31 where signs were recorded for a specific purpose to bring about faith in Jesus. John recognizes that unless one has this faith (belief), he will not have eternal life. John also explains what belief in Jesus really means in John 3:36 and that belief is obedience according to John through inspiration. John begins his biography of Jesus by starting at the very creation of the world, showing Jesus as 'The Word was God' and 'became flesh and resided among us' (John 1:1-3, 14). From there, the focus is on showing the life, teachings, and miracles of Jesus in such a way that the reader might 'believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, *the reader* may have life in His name' (John 20:30-31). So as you read this great book from God, focus on how John builds the witnesses of Jesus, the signs, and wonders of God's Son and how God brings about faith and belief in the reader with confidence that Jesus is God's Son. Among other things, it is in this Good-news account that we learn that Jesus rejected the idea of setting up an earthly kingdom (John 6:15, 18:36). A later writing of John, Revelation tells us he made for us, Christians, a kingdom, and we are the priests of God, Revelation 1:6.

### **Introduction to Luke**

60-62 AD

The Good-news account by Luke was written from a historian's point of view to Theophilus, Gentiles, and people everywhere. This doctor, a close friend of Paul, a Greek and Gentile Christian and the only Gentile writer in the New Testament was very specific when describing when and where things took place. As such, Luke is the most detail-oriented of the four Good-news accounts. Beginning with the miraculous birth of John (a relative of Jesus) and Jesus'

own birth six months later, Luke reveals the life of Jesus in a very orderly manner. Luke demonstrates how the Holy Spirit promotes belief in Jesus as the Son of God in an accurate account of the life of Christ presenting Christ as the perfect human savior. Luke also influences his readers through various elements of a narrative text of Scripture that is written from Rome or possibly Caesarea. A key verse in Luke is 19: 9, 10 and our Lord and Savior's mission to save mankind. Luke stresses the Saviors relationship with people. It is in this biography of Jesus that we see Jesus foretelling the completion of the Old Testament in the lifetime of the people to whom He spoke (Luke 20:21-22). Jesus' final instructions to His apostles, after His resurrection, were 'Repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in *My* name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem' (Luke 24:47, shown in Acts 2:38). Luke also wrote Acts: The Book of Conversions.



## Matthew 1

{NOTES: If your plans are to read the entire N.T., start in Mark. Please read the Preface and other non-bible sections. \* is our universal footnoting for words contained in the 'Definitions' section. These words are NOT the same Greek word as the non-asterisk form; i.e. \*FOR is different from FOR\* is different from FOR. In this translation Old Testament names will be in their Old Testament form.}

<sup>1:1</sup> *The* book of lineage of Jesus Christ, *the* son of David, *the* son of Abraham: <sup>1:2</sup> Abraham fathered Isaac; and Isaac fathered Jacob; and Jacob fathered Judah and his brethren; <sup>1:3</sup> and Judah fathered Perez and Zerah from Tamar; and Perez fathered Hezron; and Hezron fathered Ram; <sup>1:4</sup> and Ram fathered Amminadab; and Amminadab fathered Nahshon; and Nahshon fathered Salmon; <sup>1:5</sup> and Salmon fathered Boaz from Rahab; and Boaz fathered Obed from Ruth; and Obed fathered Jesse; <sup>1:6</sup> and Jesse fathered David, the king.

And David, the king, fathered Solomon from the *widow* of Uriah; <sup>1:7</sup> and Solomon fathered Rehoboam; and Rehoboam fathered Abijah; and Abijah fathered Asa; <sup>1:8</sup> and Asa fathered Jehoshaphat; and Jehoshaphat fathered Jehoram; and Jehoram fathered Uzziah; <sup>1:9</sup> and Uzziah fathered Jotham; and Jotham fathered Ahaz; and Ahaz fathered Hezekiah; <sup>1:10</sup> and Hezekiah fathered Manasseh; and Manasseh fathered Amon; and Amon fathered Josiah; <sup>1:11</sup> and Josiah fathered Jechoniah and his brethren, at *the time of* the exile of Babylon.

<sup>1:12</sup> And after the exile of Babylon, Jechoniah fathered Shealtiel; and Shealtiel fathered Zerubbabel; <sup>1:13</sup> and Zerubbabel fathered Abiud; and Abiud fathered Eliakim; and Eliakim fathered Azor; <sup>1:14</sup> and Azor fathered Sadoc; and Sadoc fathered Achim; and Achim fathered Eliud; <sup>1:15</sup> and Eliud fathered Eleazar; and Eleazar fathered Matthan; and Matthan fathered Jacob; <sup>1:16</sup> and Jacob fathered Joseph, the husband of Mary, from whom was born Jesus, who is called\* the Christ.

{Mat 1:1-17 & Luk 3:23-28 Mary's Genealogy.}

<sup>1:17</sup> Therefore, all the generations from Abraham until David *were* fourteen generations; and from David until the exile of Babylon, *were* fourteen generations; and from the exile of Babylon until the Christ, *were* fourteen generations.

{Mat 1:18-25 Nazareth 5 BC; no parallel.}

<sup>1:18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus Christ was thus: for\* when\* his mother Mary was engaged to Joseph, before they came together, she was found *to be* pregnant {Greek: *in womb holding*} from *the* Holy Spirit. <sup>1:19</sup> Now Joseph, her husband, being a righteous man and not willing to disgrace her, planned to divorce her secretly. <sup>1:20</sup> But when\* he was contemplating these things, behold, a messenger of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary to you, *as* your wife for\* what was born {Or: *conceived*} in her is from *the* Holy Spirit. <sup>1:21</sup> Now she will be bearing a son, and you will call his name Jesus, for\* he will be saving his people from their sins. <sup>1:22</sup> Now this whole thing has happened, in order that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, <sup>1:23</sup> 'Behold, the virgin will be pregnant, and will be

bearing a son, and they will call his name Immanuel'; which is, *after* being translated, 'God with us.' {Isa 7:14, 8:8, 10} <sup>1:24</sup> Now having been aroused from his sleep, Joseph did as the messenger of the Lord commanded him and took his wife to him; <sup>1:25</sup> and did not know her *intimately* until she bore her firstborn son, and he called his name Jesus.

## Matthew 2

{Mat 2:1-12 Jerusalem & Bethlehem 4 BC; no parallel.}

<sup>2:1</sup> Now when \* Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise-men {Persian Magi; v7 & v16} from the east came into Jerusalem, <sup>2:2</sup> saying, Where is he who has been born *the* King of the Jews? For \* we saw his star in the east and have come to worship him. <sup>2:3</sup> Now when \* Herod the king heard it, he was disturbed and everyone *in* Jerusalem with him. <sup>2:4</sup> And having gathered together all the high-priests and scribes of the people, he inquired from them where the Christ should be born.

<sup>2:5</sup> Now they said to him, In Bethlehem of Judea; for \* thus it has been written through the prophet, <sup>2:6</sup> 'And Bethlehem, a land of Judah, you are by no means least among the governors of Judah; for \* a leader will be coming forth from you, who will be shepherding my people Israel.' {Mic 5:2, 2Sam 5:2}

<sup>2:7</sup> Then Herod, having called the wise-men secretly, ascertained accurately from them the time of the star's appearing. <sup>2:8</sup> And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, While \* you<sup>o</sup> are traveling, probe<sup>o</sup> out accurately *the things* concerning the young child. And whenever you<sup>o</sup> have found *him*, report<sup>o</sup> to me, \* that I *may* also come and may worship him. <sup>2:9</sup> Now having heard the king, they traveled *away*. And behold, the star, which they saw in the east, was preceding them until it came and stood above where the young child was. <sup>2:10</sup> Now having seen the star, they rejoiced *with* extremely great joy. <sup>2:11</sup> And they came into the house and saw the young child with Mary, his mother. They fell down and worshiped him. Opening their treasures, they offered gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh to him. {Isa 60:6, Psa 72:10, 15} <sup>2:12</sup> And having been divinely-warned in a dream not to revisit Herod, they departed into their own region through another way.

{Mat 2:13-18 Leaving for Egypt 4 BC; no parallel.}

<sup>2:13</sup> Now when \* they had departed, behold, a messenger of the Lord appears to Joseph in a dream, saying, When \* you arise, take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be there until I should speak to you *again*, because Herod is about to seek the young child to destroy him. <sup>2:14</sup> Now he arose, and took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt; <sup>2:15</sup> and they were there until the end of Herod; in order that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, 'Out of Egypt I called my son.' {Hos. 11:1} <sup>2:16</sup> Then Herod, having seen that he was mocked by the wise-men, was exceedingly furious, and sent forth *soldiers and* assassinated all the boys who *were* in Bethlehem, and in all her borders, from two years and downward, according to the time which he had ascertained accurately from the wise-men. <sup>2:17</sup> Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled, saying, <sup>2:18</sup> 'A voice was heard in Ramah, mourning, and weeping, and much anguish, Rachel weeping *for* her children. And she did not wish to be comforted, because they are not *there*.' {Jer 31:15}